

State and Church: Studies in Medieval Bulgaria and Byzantium



American Research Center in Sofia

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\$39.95 US

This collection presents thirteen studies dedicated to the history of medieval Bulgaria and Byzantium from the sixth to the fifteenth centuries. Offering snapshots of the cumulative expertise of three generations of Bulgarian scholars over a quarter of a century, it explores issues of critical import for the functioning of the church and state in medieval Bulgaria, and their intimate linkages to similar

Vassil Gjuzelev, Ph.D. in Medieval History, is Member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and Professor Emeritus of Medieval Bulgarian History at the St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia. Over the past forty-five years he has taught several generations of Bulgarian medievalists. He has been Visiting Professor at the universities of Moscow, Cologne, Leipzig, and Vienna. His works include fifty books and over two hundred and fifty articles on medieval Bulgarian and Byzantine history.

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Medieval Bulgaria and Byzantium maintained close and complex relations throughout the centuries. Studies on medieval Bulgaria, the medieval Bulgarians and the medieval Bulgarian lands are therefore of great interest to the Byzantinist and the medievalist alike. This collected volume of articles dealing predominantly with politics, culture, and religion showcases research that has recently been produced by leading scholars in Bulgaria. It is a welcome addition to the library of any student of the medieval Balkans.

Dimiter G. Angelov, Professor of Byzantine History, University of Birmingham

Clear and accessible, this volume highlights the contributions of leading Bulgarian medievalists interested in Byzantine studies, and offers a fresh look into new methodologies, concerns with historiography, dress symbolism, monastic life and the cult of the saints, as well as the perception and understanding of the Other. The essays collected here cover a wide range of topics and draw on a large variety of approaches to written, archaeological, and other sources. This book will be essential reading for all scholars interested in medieval Bulgaria and its relations with Byzantium.

Florin Curta, Professor of Medieval History and Archaeology,
University of Florida

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Петър Константинов

State and Church: Studies in Medieval Bulgaria and Byzantium

Edited by Vassil Gjuzelev and Kiril Petkov



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CONTENTS

PREFACE	vii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	ix
CONTRIBUTORS	x

VASSIL GJUZELEV

MEDIEVAL AND BYZANTINE STUDIES IN BULGARIA IN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES: A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION	1
--	---

GEORGI BAKALOV

RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF MEDIEVAL STATE IDEOLOGY IN THE EUROPEAN SOUTHEAST	31
--	----

PETAR ANGELOV

THE BYZANTINES AS IMAGINED BY THE MEDIEVAL BULGARIANS	47
---	----

HRISTO MATANOV

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE OTTOMAN CONQUERORS AND THE BALKAN STATES IN THE 1370s–1380s: TYPOLOGICAL ASPECTS	83
--	----

YORDANKA YURUKOVA

BYZANTINE FORTRESSES TO THE SOUTH OF THE HEMUS MOUNTAIN IN THE LIGHT OF COIN FINDS FROM THE LAST DECADES OF THE SIXTH CENTURY	93
---	----

MILIYANA KAIMAKAMOVA

THE FOUNDATION OF THE BULGARIAN STATE IN BULGARIAN MEDIEVAL HISTORIOGRAPHY	101
--	-----

LILIANA V. SIMEONOVA

THE “AVAR COSTUME” VERSUS THE <i>SKARAMANGION</i> : SYMBOLISM OF THE MALE ARISTOCRATIC DRESS IN BULGARIA, NINTH–TENTH CENTURIES	129
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ANGEL NIKOLOV	
THE PERCEPTION OF THE BULGARIAN PAST IN THE COURT OF PRES LAV AROUND 900 AD	157
IVAN BILARSKY	
ST. PETER (927-969), TSAR OF THE BULGARIANS	173
ROSSINA KOSTOVA	
PATRONAGE AND MONASTIC GEOGRAPHY IN BULGARIA IN THE LATE NINTH AND TENTH CENTURIES	189
VASILKA TĀPKOVA-ZAIMOVA	
THE DU CANGE CATALOGUE	209
ILIVA ILIEV	
THE FIRST TWO CENTURIES OF THE ARCHBISHOPRIC OF OHRID	237
CYRIL PAVLIKIANOV	
WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE ATHONITE SLAVS IN THE MIDDLE AGES?	253
SELECT ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY	267
INDEX	290

PREFACE

This collection presents thirteen studies dedicated to the history of medieval Bulgaria and Byzantium from the sixth to the fifteenth centuries. The explorations revolve around issues of critical import for the functioning of the church and state in medieval Bulgaria, and their intimate linkages to similar phenomena in Byzantium. Most of the essays have already appeared in Bulgarian publications. The collection acquaints English-speaking experts and students in the field with a sample of the directions that Bulgarian medieval scholarship has taken in the last twenty years. The historiographical overview at the beginning and the annotated bibliography at the end of the volume further introduce the reader to that academic tradition by highlighting its major phases and achievements.

On behalf of the contributors and the editors of this collection, we should like to express our gratitude to Charles Denver Graninger, Director of the American Research Center in Sofia (ARCS), for his encouragement and kind assistance, and for the Center's consistent moral and financial support. The America for Bulgaria Foundation has been most generous with extending a subvention without which this publication would not have been possible.

Finally, we would like to thank Todor Petev, Director of the US Office of ARCS, for his conceiving the idea for this volume and putting together the plan for its execution.

It is our honor to dedicate this volume to the 22nd International Congress of Byzantine Studies in Sofia, perhaps the most important scholarly event to take place in Bulgaria over the past century.

The Editors

Vassil Gjuzelev and Kiril Petkov

ABBREVIATIONS

- БСМ* Йордан Иванов. *Български старини из Македония*.
София 1931.
- ГИБИ* *Гръцки извори за българската история* [= *Fontes Graeci Historiae Bulgaricae*]. 11 тома. София 1954–1994.
- ГСУ* *Годишник на Софийския университет. Богословски факултет*
(БзФ)
- ГСУ* *Годишник на Софийския университет. Философско-исторически факултет*
(ФИФ)
- ИНМВ* *Известия на Народния музей във Варна*
- КМЕ* Петър Динеков, Лиляна Грашева (с колектив), *Кирило-Методиевска енциклопедия*. т. I, София 1985; т. II, София 1995; т. III, София 2003; т. IV (допълнения), София 2003.
- ЛИБИ* *Латински извори за българската история* [= *Fontes Latini Historiae Bulgaricae*]. 5 тома. София 1958–2001.
- ТВТУ, ИФ* *Трудове на Великотърновски университет „Св. св. Кирил и Методий“*, *Исторически факултет*
- CFHB* *Corpus fontium Historiae Bizantinae*
- MGH* *Monumenta Germaniae historica*
- PGr* *Patrologia Graeca*
- PL* *Patrologia Latina*

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**MEDIEVAL AND BYZANTINE STUDIES IN BULGARIA IN
THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES:
A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION**

Vassil Gjuzelev

The formation and rise of European nation-states in the nineteenth century stirred vivid interest in the history of the Middle Ages. For scholars of the time, the medieval centuries were the period of national genesis and entrance into history.¹ It was only logical therefore that the Middle Ages would attract the effort of some of the most distinguished European historians. The nationalist interest evident in European medieval studies also affected the work of the prominent exponents of the Bulgarian medieval historiography. While continuing the work of the Bulgarian medievalist school of the eighteenth century, the highly erudite Bulgarian historians of the nineteenth century did eventually overcome the Romantic approach of the preceding generation. They laid the foundations for the systematic and critical investigation of medieval history, an approach which placed them in line with contemporaneous European historiography.

The Period before 1878

The first half of the nineteenth century was a period in which the Slavic studies by Russian and Czech scholars stimulated interest in the medieval history and culture of the Bulgarians. The work of a Czech scholar, Pavel-Josef Šafařík, on the Golden Age of Bulgarian letters in the tenth century won considerable popularity in its Russian, German, and Bulgarian translations, drawing attention to an important moment in Bulgaria's cultural history and inspiring interest in Old Bulgarian literature. Bulgarian literary topics held an important place in Slavic and medieval studies in Russia, which also contributed to the interest in Bulgarian medieval history. A study by Konstantin Kalaidovich,

¹ A version of this text with extensive bibliographic references was published in Васил Гюзелев. *Апология на Средновековието*. София 2004, 143-159. For further references, see the annotated bibliography appended to the present volume.

published in 1824 and devoted to John the Exarch, the outstanding man of letters of Tsar Symeon's Golden Age (ninth–tenth century), heralded the advent of monographic investigation of Old Bulgarian letters and culture. This was followed by the publications of the Ukrainian philologist and ethnographer Yuri Venelin, on the history of medieval Bulgaria, which gained considerable currency among Bulgarians during the National Revival period. Other influential works were the philological studies of Osip Bodyansky, professor at Moscow University, who introduced a number of his Bulgarian students to historical and philological research. A second major center where Bulgarian studies were being advanced was formed at the University of Odessa, where the key figures were N. Murzakevich and V. Grigorovich. Bulgarian medieval manuscripts in the published catalogs of various collections in Russia, and the discovery of the fourteenth-century Middle Bulgarian translation of the *Chronicle of Constantine Manasses* further stimulated interest of Russian historians in medieval Bulgaria.

The first scholarly product of the Bulgarian students in the circle around Bodyansky was a compilation by Zahari Knyazhevski (1810–1877), *Introduction to the History of the Bulgarian Slavs from the Fifth Century to 1396*, published in Moscow in 1848. The author had not directly studied the sources, but composed his work mainly on the basis of books by the Austrian historian Johann Engel, the Russian translation of *Slovanské starožitnosti* [Slavonic Antiquities] by Pavel-Josef Šafařík, and studies of Russian scholars. This popular history of medieval Bulgaria became an important conduit of contemporary historical ideas to readers in Bulgaria.

The public activity and scholarly work of Vasil Aprilov (1789–1847) were important factors in the further development of medieval Bulgarian historiography during the National Revival period. In many respects, Aprilov played a decisive role in imposing the critical scholarly approach. In his works, relatively few in numbers, he attempted to resolve the question of the ethnogenesis of the Bulgarians, contending that they belonged to the Slavic group, after J. Raijć and Y. Venelin who had developed that theory and applied it to the issue of the ethnic origins of the Proto-Bulgarians. Aprilov also maintained the view that the conversion to Christianity, and the adoption and spread of the Slavonic script, had a crucial and enduring impact on the development of the medieval Bulgarian state. A champion of Eastern Orthodoxy in general and of the identification of the Bulgarian people with it, Aprilov asserted his conviction about the nefarious role played by

the Byzantine Empire, Church, and culture in Bulgaria's historical fortunes. He presented impressive logical and philological arguments in support of his thesis that Cyril and Methodius were Bulgarians. Aprilov's publication of medieval Bulgarian charters in his book, *Bulgarian Charters* (1845), marks his significant contribution to the field. In it the author demonstrated the importance of domestic sources in scholarly research. This publication stirred interest in Old Bulgarian written records and, until 1911, was the sole edition of documents of the Bulgarian medieval chancellery. Aprilov was influential in the overall organization and promotion of Bulgarian studies in general. He was one of the first to treat Bulgarian history as an integral whole in keeping with the contemporary standards of scholarship. He rallied patriotic Bulgarians to search for and bring to light Bulgarian antiquities (medieval manuscripts, charters, inscriptions, coins, etc.), making every effort to heighten interest in the Bulgarian people and their history in Russia and other Slavic countries.

The Romantic historiography developed concurrently with the emergence of the critical approach in historical studies during the National Revival period. Its works had a broader appeal to and exercised a stronger impact on Bulgarian society. The deliberate extolling of the ancient past and the grandeur of Bulgarians in the Middle Ages was more to the liking of the general public and helped to strengthen national self-awareness and historical memory. *The Tsarstvenik* [The Book of Kings] of Hristaki Pavlovich and *Slaviyanske starini* [Slavic Antiquities] by Konstantin Fotinov, were based on Paissy of Hilandar's patriotic *Slav-Bulgarian History* (1762). They were followed by the fervent historical writings of Georgi Rakovski and Gavril Krüstevich. These works left no appreciable trace in the development of the scholarly studies of medieval Bulgaria and, after a brief period of relevance, sank into oblivion.

Three remarkable and highly erudite historians in the second half of the nineteenth century shaped the character and trends of medieval studies in Bulgaria and their place in a European context: Spiridon Palauzov, Marin Drinov, and Konstantin Jireček. In their works, the traditions of Russian Slavistics were blended with the methods and critical approach of Western and Central European historical science. They set the patterns and standards to be followed by generations of Bulgarian medievalists. The subsequent sound study of the history, institutions, and culture of medieval Bulgaria is due to a great extent to these three scholars, who were inspired by the spirit of the national Romantic school, but completely distanced itself from its

methods in the interest of genuine academic scholarship.

Spiridon Palauzov (1818–1872) received solid university training in Odessa, Munich, Vienna, and Moscow. His immediate teachers in medieval studies were such remarkable scholars as J. Fallmerayer, F. Miklošič, O. Bodyansky, and I. Sreznievsky. His monographic studies cover a range of topics on the political, ecclesiastical, and cultural history of medieval Bulgaria and other nations. He introduced to the Bulgarian academic discourse a number of new sources and urged the writing of comprehensive historical works. With all that, Palauzov thoroughly regenerated Bulgarian medieval studies of the National Revival period, equipping them with the methods of European historiography. Prominent among his thematically diverse writings are two monographs: *The Age of the Bulgarian Tsar Symeon* (1852) and *Jan Huniyadi* (1860), and his eminently instructive studies of primary sources. His work was motivated by inspiration associated with the National Revival period, but it crossed the threshold to a historiography of a higher order, laying the foundations of the discipline.²

Marin Drinov (1838–1906), until recently considered the “first Bulgarian historian,” was closely related to the so-called “Bulgarian critical school of history” and the work of Spiridon Palauzov (Fig. 1).

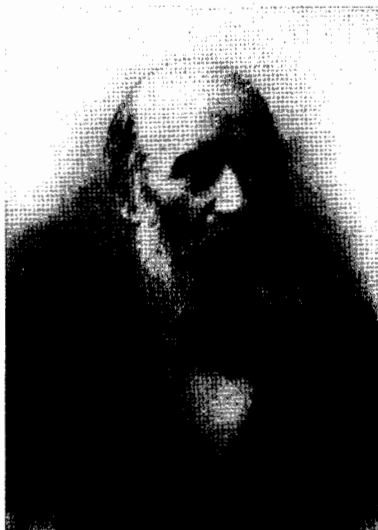


Figure 1. Marin Drinov (1838–1906) was historian and philologist from the National Revival period. He is considered to be one of originators of Bulgarian historiography. Through most of his life Drinov, lived and worked in Russia. In 1869 he became founding member of the Bulgarian Literary Society, the predecessor of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

² Димитър Цанев. *Българската историческа книжнина през Възраждането (XVIII – първата половина на XIX век)*. София 1989, 174.

His research activity and publications, which were repeatedly scrutinized, have long since won high and deserved recognition. A graduate of Moscow University, fellow-student of the outstanding Russian historian V. Klyuchevsky and a number of Bulgarian national revivalists, Drinov adopted the critical approach and methods of the advanced Russian historical and philological scholarship, and was imbued with the spirit and ideas of the Bulgarian National Revival movement. Thanks to his remarkable and highly topical monographic studies and works of general character, he made a name for himself in European Slavistics, a discipline which had come into being in the second half of the nineteenth century. His contributions further accelerated the dominance of critical methodology in Bulgarian medieval studies. Similar to Paissy, Drinov's activities and research on Bulgaria's medieval past were closely linked to the main matters preoccupying the nation during the Revival period: they responded to the need for a well-grounded defense of its historical right to national independence and recognition among other European nations. Drinov was the rallying figure of Bulgarian historical and philological scholarly self-awareness, a true pillar of these disciplines in Bulgaria in the second half of the nineteenth century.

While Drinov's monographs on Bulgarian medieval history continued the tradition started by Spiridon Palauzov, they were distinguished by considerably higher erudition, analytical prowess, and insight. His work covered the entire history of the Bulgarian lands and people from Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages through the eighteenth century. According to his brief but pertinent formulation, "national self-awakening" was the ultimate objective of Bulgarian historiography. Drinov did not write a comprehensive work on political and cultural history, but he left behind a systematic and inclusive study of the history of the Bulgarian Church that became of paramount importance to the struggles of Bulgarians for national recognition.³ Fundamentally significant to the progress of medieval studies in Bulgaria, many of his publications contain ideas still relevant today. In his notable study on the settlement of the Slavs on the Balkan Peninsula, he demonstrated the early penetration of the Slavic ethnos in these lands, their massive colonization in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, and accurately located the areas settled by particular Slavic

³ Марин Дринов. *Исторически преглед на българската църква от самото ѝ начало и до днес*. Виена 1869.

tribes.⁴ Overturning certain assumptions made by his predecessors, he resolved the extremely complicated problem of the origin of the Proto-Bulgarians, the beginnings of Bulgarian history and the Bulgarian state, and the role of the Proto-Bulgarian element in this process.

Of particular importance for the recognition of Drinov as an outstanding European authority on Slavic-Byzantine and Bulgarian-Byzantine relations was his monograph *The Southern Slavs and Byzantium in the Tenth Century* (1875). This book was not only one of his major contributions to medieval studies in general, but also defined „an epoch in Slavic historical studies“.⁵ Eminently influential in the advancement of historical source criticism and its affirmation as a first-rate auxiliary historical discipline were Drinov's investigations of a number of valuable medieval records (the *Synodicon* of the Bulgarian Church; the charters of Basil II Bulgaroktonos; several charters of Bulgarian tsars, etc.). Drinov decisively established the scholarly investigation of Bulgarian history as an important component in Slavic, medieval, and Byzantine studies, and vindicated its right to independent existence and development.

Konstantin Jireček (1854–1918), the eminently gifted Czech scholar of the medieval history of the Southern Slavs, largely owed his vocational orientation to his family background, but also to the support and encouragement of Marin Drinov (Fig. 2).



Figure 2. Konstantin Jireček (1854–1918) was a Czech historian, diplomat and scholar of Slavistics, best known for his studies on the history and literature of southern Slavs. Beginning in 1879, Jireček took high political positions at the newly established Ministry of Education in Bulgaria. For some time he was also Director of the National Library. In 1884 he became professor in history at Charles University in Prague, and in 1893 he took the professorship in Slavonic antiquities at the University of Vienna.

⁴ Idem. *Заселение Балканскаго полуострова славянами*. Москва 1872.

⁵ Гюзелев, *Апология на Средновековието*, 106.

At the age of twenty-one, Jireček wrote his remarkable *Geschichte der Bulgaren* (1876), synthesizing the monographic studies and general works that had been published until then. Appearing at a time of events crucial to the fortunes of the Bulgarian people (the April Uprising of 1876 and the Liberation of Bulgaria in 1878) and published in Czech, German, and Russian, Jireček's *History* played a pivotal role in the "discovery" of the Bulgarians by the European public and, for a long time, retained its preeminence as a fundamental and authoritative work on Bulgaria's past. At the same time, in various adaptations, it served as a reliable source for the "national self-awakening" of the Bulgarians' in their liberated homeland. Due to its wide diffusion and role in the formation of a Bulgarian "national self-consciousness," it can rightly be compared to Paissy of Hilandar's *Slav-Bulgarian History*.

Although written by a foreigner, *History of the Bulgarians* was an intellectual product closely involved in the evolution of medieval studies in Bulgaria and epitomizing an important stage in their development. Composing it in the positivistic and ideographic spirit dominant in European historiography at the time, the author examined specific areas of research and social structures—such as the church, government and administration, social and economic conditions, etc.—and traced the overall political and cultural development of Bulgaria. In this way, a completely modern pattern of investigating history was set, which regrettably did not meet the preferences of later Bulgarian medievalists. Bulgarian history continued to hold an important place in Jireček's work, though it was gradually displaced by his studies on the medieval history of Serbia and Dubrovnik. His revisions to his celebrated *History of the Bulgarians*, for which he planned another edition, have survived only in the numerous "amendments and additions" published long after his death. These have proved essential to the expansion of the framework of his *History*, as well as to modern historical approaches in general. Jireček's *Travels across Bulgaria*, published in Czech in 1888, was also helpful for the study of the antique and medieval history of the Bulgarian lands and was considered to be a veritable "encyclopedia of Bulgarian towns and villages."

The Late Nineteenth Century till 1945

Bulgaria was liberated from Ottoman rule in 1878, and the new Bulgarian

state was established. Almost a decade earlier, in 1869, the Bulgarian Literary Society moved from Braila, Romania, to Sofia (in 1911 it evolved into the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences). A Higher School was founded in Sofia in 1888, which in 1904 became the Sofia University. These factors all contributed to the favorable conditions in which Bulgarian studies thrived. This, in turn, benefited medieval studies, which were now becoming part of the university curriculum and were in a better position to foster the need for national consciousness and education.

The post-Liberation political and cultural upswing, the setting up of various institutions and associations, and the increasing role of the University and the Academy favored scientific and scholarly activity. The changes that occurred in the political, social, and economic life of Bulgaria in the twentieth century left their mark on the fortunes of scholarship, its strategies and performance. For a long period after the Liberation certain fields in the humanities (history, philology, archaeology, and ethnography) had political influence, which stabilized the nation. Those disciplines became the public face and defined the achievements of Bulgarian scholarship as a whole.

Two distinct periods can be discerned in the development of Bulgarian medieval studies during the twentieth century. The first phase encompassed the span between the turn of the century and the end of the Second World War in 1945; the second reached to the end of the century. Three consecutive generations of Bulgarian medievalists were active during these two periods. The current political and ideological circumstances and the changes in the Bulgarian state and society had strong impact and distinguished the work of these scholars. While the historical publications of the first period show an unbroken continuity with the scholarship of the nineteenth century, in the second period this continuity was severely disrupted. We shall now turn to examine the conditions which shaped Bulgarian medieval historiography in the first half of the twentieth century.

Medieval studies developed as the leading branch of historical and philological studies during the first half of the twentieth century. The outstanding researchers of the field were among the most influential and respected scholars in Bulgaria as well as beyond its borders. The medievalist school at Sofia University emerged at this time with a distinctive profile, methods of research, and traditions, some of which have survived to the present day. During the early decades of the century the discipline consolidated the

groundwork of scholarly research laid in the nineteenth century and developed its own unique character as it gradually detached from Russian Byzantine and Slavic studies from the pre-revolutionary period and aligned with the trends of Central European (especially German) historical scholarship.

The undisputed founding father of medieval studies as an academic discipline in Bulgaria was Vasil N. Zlatarski (1866-1935), the most distinguished Bulgarian medievalist of all times (Fig. 3).



Figure 3. Vasil N. Zlatarski (1866-1935) was the founder of medieval studies at Sofia University. His publications on medieval history, archaeology and epigraphy had and still have formative influence on generations of Bulgarian historians. This photo was taken in 1934, during the Fourth International Congress of Byzantine Studies in Sofia.

He and his students and followers, Nikola Milev (1881–1925), Petūr Nikov (1884–1938), and Petūr Mutafčiev (1883–1943), (Fig. 4), came to the foreground as the universally recognized leaders in Bulgarian historical studies. Zlatarski graduated from the St. Petersburg University under the founders of Byzantine Studies in Russia, V. G. Vasilevsky and V. Lamansky, and did postgraduate work in Germany. His students, on the other hand, began their education under him at Sofia University and then continued with postgraduate work in Germany and Austria-Hungary with such eminent scholars as Karl

Krumbacher, Konstantin Jireček, Karl Übersberger, and August Heisenberg. The first post-Liberation generation of medievalists and its leader were superbly trained and erudite scholars, trained in the spirit of the National Revival and the tradition in Bulgarian medieval studies established in the late nineteenth century. Under their care the second generation of medievalists was raised and matured, including Ivan Dujčev (1907–1986) (Fig. 5),



Figure 4. Petūr Mutafčiev (1883–1943) was an insightful scholar of medieval Bulgaria. After graduation from Sofia University, he specialized in Byzantine history and Greek paleography with August Heisenberg at the University of Munich and introduced the study of Byzantine history to the university curriculum in Bulgaria.



Figure 5. Ivan Dujčev (1907–1986) was an eminent paleographer and historian of Medieval Bulgaria and Byzantium. Among his teachers at Sofia University were Vasil Zlatarski, Petūr Mutafčiev, Petūr Nikov, and Petr Bitsilli. In 1934 he defended his doctoral dissertation at the University of Rome with Silvio Giuseppe Mercati as his academic adviser. Before returning to Bulgaria, he also completed the School of Paleography and Archival Studies at the Vatican.

Alexandūr Burmov (1911–1965), Dimitūr Angelov (1917–1996) (Fig. 6), and Borislav Primov (1918–1983). After graduation from Sofia University, the members of this second generation continued their advanced studies in Italy, Austria, Germany, and Great Britain.

A sizable number of students were drawn toward medieval studies during



Figure 6. Dimităr Angelov (1917–1996) was an outstanding and highly prolific Byzantinist and medievalist, who began his studies at Sofia University and eventually defended a PhD dissertation at the University of Munich on the Bogomil doctrine in the Byzantine Empire.

the post-Liberation period until the end of the Second World War. This trend corresponded to that of the rest of Europe, but, as with other Balkan countries, it was rather more pronounced in Bulgaria due to the desire to foster national self-consciousness. The collapse of national ideals after the First World War resulted in a need to search for moral and spiritual mainstays in the shadows and the monuments of the medieval past. As during the National Revival period, the gloomy post-war times, Bulgarian medieval studies sustained and stimulated the frustrated national spirit and revived the traditions of national education.

Concurrent with the traditional investigations of Bulgarian past, Bulgarian scholars published works in the fields of Byzantine and general history of the Middle Ages. The leading centers for such explorations in the country were the Faculty of History and Philology and the Faculty of Law at Sofia University, and the Historical and Philological Branch of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. The major works of the notable medievalists were published in several prominent periodicals: *Yearbook of the St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia*, *Periodical Publications of the Literary Society* (the later *Journal of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences*), and *Compendium of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences*. The founding of the Historical Society and the Sofia Archaeological Society (both in 1901), as well as a number of regional archaeological associations in other towns and cities, stimulated

interest in medieval Bulgarian monuments and the study of Bulgaria's cultural heritage.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Russian Archaeological Institute in Constantinople (est. 1894) headed by Fyodor Uspensky was contributing actively to the interest in the archaeological monuments and material culture of medieval Bulgaria. The exploration of sites in Macedonia and the excavations at the Old Bulgarian capitals of Pliska and Veliki Preslav, published in the Proceedings of the Institute, actually laid the groundwork for the archaeology of medieval Bulgaria.

The Bulgarian Archaeological Institute was set up in 1923 and, thanks to the efforts of its director, Bogdan Filov (1883-1945), evolved quickly into the leading center for the study of Old Bulgarian material culture and art. The institute organized the Fourth International Congress of Byzantine Studies, held in Sofia in 1934. On this occasion (and for the first time), extensive excavations were undertaken at the sites of major Old Bulgarian state and religious centers (Pliska, Madara, Veliki Preslav, Tŭrnovo, etc.). The Institute's two periodicals, Proceedings of the Bulgarian Archaeological Institute and Proceedings of the National Museum in Sofia, became authoritative publications of national and international importance for the study of the material culture of medieval Bulgarian and the Slavic-Byzantine cultural commonwealth.

While the significance of primary sources was understood during the National Revival period, it was the post-Liberation Bulgarian medievalists who fully realized the need for systematic study and publication of sources, especially texts. V. N. Zlatarski devoted a number of his works to the study of historical sources. In 1905, an Archaeographic Commission, composed of eminent scholars, was appointed at the Ministry of Public Education on the initiative of the eminent philologist and politician Ivan Shishmanov (1862-1928). Its main task was to trace and publish domestic written records. In 1914, the functions of the Commission were transferred to the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. From 1918 onwards, a number of Old Bulgarian literary works and documents were published in a series entitled *Bŭlgarski starini* [Bulgarian Antiquities]. In his inaugural university lecture delivered in 1920, Petŭr Nikov articulated a view already firmly established among historians, namely, that "it is necessary to prepare and start (in Bulgaria) the publication of a comprehensive collection, the various sections of which will

gradually incorporate, in rigorous critical editions, all materials on Bulgarian history now dispersed in the four quarters of the globe, in this country and abroad.”⁶ The reasons that this idea was only partially implemented should be sought, above all, in the meager financial support provided by Bulgarian governments and the absence of a long-term strategy in national policy. Textual sources from medieval Bulgaria, diverse in origin, language, and character, were published in uncoordinated fashion in separate volumes or dispersed in various periodicals.

The reliance on Byzantine documents as the principal and most trustworthy sources for reconstructing Bulgarian political history led some of the leading medievalists to a sad conclusion best articulated by P. Mutařčiev: “It could boldly and without reservations be stated that if historical research did not have access to the accounts of Byzantine authors regarding their Bulgarian contemporaries, we would hardly have had the discipline of Bulgarian historical studies today. Precisely the fact that the sources used to study the history of Bulgaria are of foreign origin, explains why our (Bulgarian) history, such as we commonly know it, presents mainly a beadroll of kings and wars—an unsatisfying history of our (Bulgarian) state rather than a history of the Bulgarian people. The Byzantines, and foreigners generally, showed interest in us and referred to us only insofar as their national interests crossed with ours. Accordingly, they have noted only those external phenomena, events, and facts of our life that were in some way related to their own historical existence. It is therefore only natural that in the sole presence of such accounts a history of Bulgarian life—intellectual, social, and political—cannot be written. Even less possible is here the drawing of broader general inferences.”⁷ The ubiquitous use of Byzantine sources for scholarly research found in compendia and single publications did not inspire any inclination to publish them in a systematic fashion. Individual readings of Byzantine epigraphic records, the publication of certain charters, letters, and other sources in fragmentary form or in translation, round off the impression of slight interest in Byzantine source study. The most serious achievement in that area are the translations by Symeon, Metropolitan of Varna and Preslav

⁶ Петър Ников. „Задачата на днешната българска историография“. *Годишник на Софийския университет, Историко-филологически факултет*, 17 (1921), 306.

⁷ Петър Мутаřчиев. „Към философията на българската история (Византинизъмът в средновековна България)“. *Философски преглед*, 3/1 (1931/2), 28.

(1840–1937), of the *Letter of Photius to Prince Boris I Mikhail* of 866 and the *Letters of Archbishop Theophylactus* (eleventh–twelfth centuries).

On the other hand, there was a pronounced tendency established in post-1878 Bulgarian medieval studies to publish and make accessible Old Bulgarian literary, epigraphic, artistic, material, and other records. The ordering and cataloging of Old Bulgarian texts and literature was soon to produce useful results. The manuscript collections of the National Library, the Holy Synod, and the Rila Monastery were described and published in catalogs.⁸ An effort was made to register Bulgarian manuscripts in libraries abroad. Among the published Old Bulgarian literary records of crucial importance are the *Oration of Presbyter Kozma* (tenth century) and the *Synodicon of the Bulgarian Church* of the thirteenth–fourteenth centuries, which came out in the *Bulgarian Antiquities* series. The compendia of local literary records compiled by Yordan Ivanov are valuable sources still frequently used by Bulgarian and foreign researchers. The translations and publications made by Vasil S. Kiselkov (1887–1973) and Ivan Dujčev of a number of Old Bulgarian literary and historical monuments from the First and Second Bulgarian Kingdoms widely propagated local historical sources both



in academic and lay circles. The publication of the Proto-Bulgarian inscriptions in Greek by Veselin Beshevliev (1900–1992) (Fig. 7), documenting the brilliant history of the Bulgarian khanate on the Lower Danube in the pagan period (seventh to ninth centuries), was an outstanding scholarly feat.

Figure 7. Veselin Beshevliev (1900–1992) was a historian, epigrapher and philologist who received solid training in Slavic and Classical philology at universities in Sofia, Halle, Jena and Würzburg. Upon completion of his PhD dissertation at the last one, he returned to Bulgaria where he launched a prolific academic career. His publications on Old Bulgarian epigraphy and studies on pre-Christian Bulgaria are of fundamental importance to scholars.

⁸ For a list of catalogues of manuscript collections prepared during that period, see Гюзелев, *Апология на Средновековието*, 149, no. 87.

The editions by two foreign scholars of the charters of medieval Bulgarian tsars and the writings of Patriarch Euthymius (1375–1394) and other Old Bulgarian men of letters of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries closed a substantial gap in the study of Bulgarian historical sources.⁹ The critical editions of domestic textual sources contributed to revealing the Bulgarian “perspective,” and this was in itself a serious attempt at overcoming the Byzantino-centrism and the weighty records on medieval Bulgaria left by Byzantine historians and chroniclers.

Another important advancement in the study of historical sources was the introduction of Western (mainly Latin) sources to scholarly research and publication. A number of Western historical texts—Hungarian medieval charters of the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries, documents from the archives of Venice, Genoa, and Dubrovnik, the Vatican Secret Archives, and others—entered into academic circulation and portended the gradual integration of Bulgarian medieval studies within the conceptual framework of medieval studies in Central and Western Europe. The crowning achievements of this integration were two exemplary publications: *The Answers of Pope Nicholas I to the Queries of the Bulgarians of 866* by Dimitŭr Dechev (1877–1958) and the *Correspondence of Pope Innocent III (1198–1216) with the Bulgarians* by Ivan Dujčev. The information provided by Latin sources enriched our knowledge of medieval Bulgaria in terms of events, persons, economic conditions, domestic culture, and ethno-demographic and socioeconomic processes.

Significant progress in the study of medieval Bulgarian history was made upon the discovery of artifacts of material and artistic culture with the aid of auxiliary historical disciplines such as archaeology, numismatics, sphragistics, and art history. In the period after 1878 these disciplines were given full scope to unfold their potential. On the one hand, they were linked to museum activity; on the other, they were part of the process of searching for new sources of information on the early period of Bulgarian history. Thanks to V. N. Zlatarski and the noted Russian Byzantinist, F. Uspensky, the organic connection between historical and archaeological research was recognized as two sides of an integral process. The earliest excavations at the Old Bulgarian capitals

⁹ Emil Kałuźniacki. *Werke des Patriarchen von Bulgarien Euthymius (1375–1393); Nach den besten Handschriften*. Wien 1901 and Г.А. Ильинский. *Грамоты болгарских царей*. Москва 1911.

Pliska and Veliki Preslav with the participation of the Russian Archaeological Institute in Constantinople at the beginning of the twentieth century gave impetus to the development of Bulgarian medieval archaeology and, at the same time, produced a brilliant model of comprehensive publication of the archaeological findings.¹⁰ The subsequent resumption of these excavations, for which the credit must go to Karel Škorpil, Yordan Gospodinov, and Krastyu Miyatev, and the publications on the cultic site of Madara, had an important role in introducing the international academic community to the unique and splendid culture of early medieval Bulgaria. The grandeur of the Madara Horseman, the numerous Proto-Bulgarian inscriptions in Greek, and the monumental painted ceramics of Pliska and Preslav commanded the attention not only of Bulgarian and foreign specialists (archaeologists, art and architectural historians), but of the general public as well. The activities and authoritative periodicals and monographic publications of the Archaeological Institute created by B. Filov transformed the institution into a major scholarly center for the study of the Old Bulgarian cultural heritage. During that period appeared several remarkable studies of individual monuments with emblematic significance for Bulgarian history or of great artistic and historical merit, such as the treasure of Nagy-Szent-Miklós (ninth century), published by Nikola Mavrodinov, and the murals of the Boyana church of 1259, examined by André Grabar. During this period, important studies were conducted on outstanding examples of Bulgarian manuscript illumination, such as Filov's publications on the *Chronicle of Manasses* (1345) and the *Tetraevangelia of Tsar Ivan Alexander* (1356). In the period between the two World Wars a Hungarian archaeologist, Géza Fehér (1890–1955), played a prominent role in the investigation and presentation of the Old Bulgarian historical and artistic heritage, though his views on particular issues remained controversial. Publishing and popularizing the monuments of Old Bulgarian material culture and art had a powerful impact both on academic research and social life in Bulgaria. The historical and cultural heritage of medieval Bulgaria emerged as the mainstay of national identity and self-confidence, especially in the distressing years after the two national catastrophes, the Balkan Wars and the First World War. Once again, the ruins of medieval towns and strongholds, of churches and monasteries of the medieval past resonated deeply in the Bulgarian self-consciousness with their indications

¹⁰ *Известия Русского Археологического Института в Константинополе. X. Абоба-Плиска. София 1905.*

of past glory and grandeur, to heal the wounds inflicted by the disastrous policies of modern times.

It is hardly surprising that during that period numerous general studies in almost every branch of medieval studies in Bulgaria saw the light of day, some of which have retained their value to the present. Without doubt, Zlatarski's *History of the Bulgarian State in the Middle Ages* (1918, 1927, 1934, 1940) holds the place of pride among them. The result of nearly forty years of active research, this unfinished opus (it reaches to the year 1280) epitomizes its author's unparalleled achievement in the study of medieval Bulgarian political history. A sort of encyclopedia in many ways, it is a departure point and a benchmark for subsequent studies. In contrast to K. Jireček, V. N. Zlatarski subscribed to the notion that a presentation of the history of the Bulgarians must begin with the earliest references to them in the written sources rather than with the history of the eastern Balkan territories in Antiquity. The drawback to his multi-volume work is that it pieces together investigations on particular issues and lacks the organic unity that would have been supplied by an integrated heuristic approach and conceptual organization.

Two comprehensive works by P. Mutafčiev, while essentially addressed to the general reader, attempt to make up for that shortcoming. Mutafčiev's *History of the Bulgarian People* (1943–44), which also remained unfinished (reaching to the year 1323), is closer in structure to Jireček's *History of the Bulgarians*, but surpasses it in factual content and is compositionally and conceptually superior. The sound argumentation and compelling ideas of Mutafčiev's *History* continue to exercise a strong influence on modern medieval studies in Bulgaria. His *Book about the Bulgarians*, left in manuscript form and only recently published, is a work of original conception. Indeed, so far it is the only attempt to describe the driving forces at play in Bulgarian medieval history from the vantage points of geopolitics and cultural history; it is an unique example of a *sui generis* philosophy of Bulgarian medieval history.

The comprehensive history of the Bulgarian Church has been a subject of numerous studies since Marin Drinov's publication in 1869 opened the field for critical investigation. Regrettably few, if any, of these early publications have stood the test of time. An exception in that respect is Ivan Snegarov's *History of the Archbishopric of Ohrid* (1924–31), a remarkable and scrupulously documented work that remains essential. The early studies

of medieval Bulgarian law also, proved largely inadequate. The numerous general surveys, which appeared in the form of university textbooks in the first half of the twentieth century, are now obsolete. Despite the scores of specialized publications by Bulgarian and Russian scholars of Old Bulgarian literature, the period left no comprehensive work on medieval Bulgarian literary life and its diverse literary genres. Archaeology and art history, on the other hand, made important advancements towards syntheses.¹¹ A prime example of that is André Grabar's study of medieval Bulgarian monumental painting, which delineated the place of medieval Bulgarian art in the Byzantine-Slavic cultural symbiosis.¹² This work had a defining impact on the evolution of Bulgarian art history.

A distinctive development during the period before the Second World War was an increasingly intensifying interest in the origins and history of the Proto-Bulgarians, which bordered on a sort of academic obsession. Fortunately, the authoritative intervention of V. N. Zlatarski and several of his followers cooled passions and restored the standard for serious scholarship. That fleeting fashion produced some valuable results, among which the highly erudite work of Ivan Shishmanov on the name and origin of the Proto-Bulgarians (1900) and important studies by Zlatarski and Fehér. The long neglected subject of the economic history of medieval Bulgaria found a talented and dedicated researcher in Ivan Sakūzov (1895–1935). His economic and social studies focused on the relations of Bulgaria with Dubrovnik, Venice, and Genoa, and were based on solid research of unpublished archival material scattered among different collections.¹³ Occasionally, the overriding interest in political, ecclesiastical, and cultural history gave way to studies on socioeconomic issues, heretical religious teachings and movements, some of which were presented from a Marxist standpoint. Written unprofessionally, without the requisite knowledge and academic rigor, these desultory attempts did not exert any appreciable influence on the development of medieval studies in Bulgaria.

¹¹ Separate historiographical essays and annotated bibliographies on Bulgarian literary studies, art history, and theology in Medieval Bulgaria will appear in a forthcoming volume of the American Research Center in Sofia.

¹² André Grabar. *La peinture religieuse en Bulgarie*. Paris 1928.

¹³ For extensive bibliography of Sakūzov's main publications, see Гюзелев, *op. cit.*, 152, no. 113.

Bulgarian medievalists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries demonstrated little affinity toward theorizing and the philosophy of history. Many of them received their education or specialized training in Russia, Germany, and Austria. Ideologically and methodologically, they were exposed predominantly to the influence of positivism and the ideographic approach to history. Marxism had initially attracted some eminent medievalists, such as P. Mutafčiev and I. Sakūzov, but with time, they gradually emancipated themselves and drifted away from its postulates. The positivistic leaning in historiography, a conviction in the inherent objectivity and logic of historical events and processes and a belief in the causality in history, were powerfully expressed in 1895 by V. N. Zlatarski in his inaugural lecture at the University of Sofia. According to him, “the historian does not create events, nor can he change their course; they occur, take their course, and follow one another according to natural and historical laws and hence, by virtue of these laws, they group by themselves and define the boundaries of certain epochs and periods.” Further, he argued that “chance cannot have a place in history as long as we recognize the existence of historical laws.”¹⁴ In his historical investigations, however, Zlatarski eschewed his early theories and sought rather to depict Bulgarian medieval history through personalities and events in a strictly chronological framework while looking for particular (geographic, political, ethnic, and other) factors. Zlatarski endorsed the “social school” of Karl Lamprecht and recognized the importance of the cultural processes in historical context. His work, however, remained attached primarily to political history.

Petūr Nikov was an ardent adherent of the critical method of positivism championed by the German historian Berthold Niebuhr. A pupil of Niebuhr’s followers, Karl Krumbacher and Konstantin Jireček, Nikov set as his principal task the pursuit of objectivity based on a critical and unbiased approach to sources. In his appraisal of contemporary historiography, he advocated no theoretical interpretation of history, only a drive toward the statement of facts. The main task of historical studies, in his view, was to reconstruct as accurately as possible the past based on historical sources.

In contrast to most Bulgarian medievalists, Petūr Mutafčiev showed a marked predilection for a theoretical-philosophical approach to the factors

¹⁴ Васил Н. Златарски. „Главни периоди в българската история. Встъпителна лекция.“ *Български преглед*, 3/2 (1895), 23–37.

behind the historical processes and to the motivations behind the actions of historical personages. This is clearly discernible in some of his articles and particularly in his books, *History of the Bulgarian People* and *Book about the Bulgarians*. His original although somewhat eclectic views derived from three main sources: his own independent analytical investigations, the Marxist influence in the early years of his career, and exponents of the early school of cultural history (J. Maurer, Jacob Burckhardt, and especially his teacher in Byzantine studies, August Heisenberg of Munich). According to Mutafčiev, "History would not have been history if it did not tell the truth, just like no one would have lasting profit from the fallacies they were fed with." In his opinion, "Historical synthesis is the last stage of historical knowledge. It is, however, objectively admissible only if sufficient factual material has been established and accumulated by detailed research. Without this it has no value and would at best amount to empty philosophizing on things unknown."¹⁵ As first among the factors which shaped medieval Bulgaria, Mutafčiev recognized the foreign policy and culture of the Byzantine Empire: "Our medieval past will never be sufficiently elucidated and properly understood if, in discussing it, the fundamental and unchanging fact is not taken into account that Bulgarians happened to live in the immediate neighborhood of Byzantium and, what is more, in lands very close to its administrative and cultural center, Constantinople. This factor determines to a higher or lesser degree the most characteristic phenomena and events in our (Bulgarian) early history. Indeed, there is more: our (Bulgarian) proximity to Byzantium has laid down the course of our entire medieval life; the influence (of the empire) has shaped our historical destiny both as a state and as a culture."¹⁶ Mutafčiev asserted that geopolitical factors have also played a crucial role in Bulgaria's past. The mountains (particularly the Hemus Mountains) played a key role in protecting the Bulgarian people; the seas surrounding the Balkan Peninsula defined medieval Bulgaria's aspiration (almost never fulfilled) to extend its borders from sea to sea; finally, the choice of political centers of the state (Pliska, Veliki Preslav, Ohrid, and Tŭrnovo), shaped to a significant extent the Bulgarian geo-political identity and territorial expansion.

Assessing the political development and fortunes of Bulgaria, Mutafčiev argued that the sole and permanent trait in Bulgarian medieval history

¹⁵ Петър Мутафчиев. *История на българския народ*. София 1943, I: 13.

¹⁶ Мутафчиев. „Към философията на българската история“, 27–28.

was the absence of constancy. In his view, Bulgarian history of that period was characterized by leaps and turns, upswings and downfalls, power and impotence. The reasons for all this, he claimed, lie, first, in the pernicious Byzantine influence, and second, in the prevalent spirit of negativism inherent in Bulgarian culture. Even when Mutafčiev's generalizations are carried to excess and are at odds with the facts, they are thought-provoking. A case in point is a statement of his where he described the Bulgarians in this manner: "Compelled to fight a life-and-death struggle with Byzantium, we had to catch up and draw level with it. And since we had not the time and peace needed to draw the elements of a higher cultural condition from the principles of our own way of life, we were compelled to entirely abandon the paths of independent creative effort and embark on those of imitation promising easier and faster achievements."¹⁷

Excellent theoretical elaborations on the methods of historical science (and particularly medieval studies) can be seen in the works of the Russian historian Petr M. Bitsilli (1879–1953), who immigrated to Bulgaria after the October Revolution and taught at the University of Sofia in 1924–1948. Regrettably, his exceptionally insightful studies, which span a wide range from the Latin Middle Ages and Renaissance to nineteenth and twentieth-century Russian history and literature, had no substantial impact on the work of Bulgarian medievalists. The product of a higher level of philosophical and sociological interpretation of medieval phenomena, his essays offered a new way of thinking about traditional medieval studies. Only in recent years has Bitsilli's work aroused scholarly interest and been appreciated for its contributions.¹⁸

Established as one of the leading disciplines in the humanities, proud of their attainments and public prestige, medieval studies in post-Liberation Bulgaria participated actively in the formation of the curriculum of national education, shaping the historical image of Bulgaria and bolstering the awareness of past greatness. The ascendancy of the medievalist branch of Bulgarian historical studies followed the general pattern observed in

¹⁷ Петър Мутафчиев. *Книга за българите*. София 1987, 23–24.

¹⁸ Н. И. Ашурова. *Петр Михайлович Бицилли*. Томск 2004 and Б.С. Каганович. *Русские медиевисты первой половины XX века*. Санкт-Петербург 2007.

other Balkan and European countries. The discipline is represented mostly through the individual achievements of leading scholars in the field rather than judiciously planned long-term team projects. It is for this reason that scholars of medieval Bulgaria failed to accomplish one of the objectives they had repeatedly set for themselves: the compilation and publication of domestic and foreign sources about Bulgaria in multi-volume compendia. Bulgarian medievalists held their dominant place in the humanities for long time; increasingly, however, they were overshadowed by the studies on the National Revival period because of its richer source material and its linguistic accessibility.

Medieval Studies between 1945 and the End of the Twentieth Century

The outcome of the Second World War and the sweeping political, social, and economic changes that began in its wake, the imposition of a totalitarian communist regime in Bulgaria, and the process of Sovietization had a dramatic impact on social sciences and the humanities in the country. Between 1944 and 1949, a radical ideological realignment took place. The dominance of the Communist Party and the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism were established. A massive reshuffle of university cadres in the social sciences occurred. Some medievalists changed their ideological positions abruptly, compelled by the need to adapt to the totalitarian political regime established after the Soviet pattern in the country. Others suffered less favorable fortunes. By early October 1944, within a month from the socialist revolution in Bulgaria, B. Filov's *Old Bulgarian Art*, P. Mutaščiev's *History of the Bulgarian People*, works by G. Fehér, and numerous other books were listed in the notorious "List of banned books." Toward the end of 1944 and the beginning of 1945, B. Filov, V. Beševliev, I. Dujčev, and a short time after, B. Primov were consecutively dismissed from the university on accusations of nationalism.¹⁹ A new journal, *Istoricheski pregled* [Historical Review], was launched in late 1944 and became the anchor of ideological change. Bulgarian historical studies were scathingly criticized and branded as "chauvinistic" and "pan-Bulgarian" at discussions, conferences, and meetings in the campaign for

¹⁹ For extensive documentation of the repressions against Bulgarian historians in the first decade of the socialist regime, see Вера Мутафчиева, ред. *Съдът над историците. Българската историческа наука—документи и дискусии (1944–1950)*. София 1995.

“Marxist-Leninist reconstruction.” This marked the beginning of the decline of Bulgarian medieval studies, exiling them from the current trends and topics of European medieval and Byzantine studies. From their preeminent status in post-Liberation historiography, Bulgarian medieval history gradually turned into an appendage to the newly introduced studies of the Communist Party and the most recent Bulgarian history.

For a long time, the imposition of Marxist-Leninist ideology and methodology impoverished scholarly activities. The new ideological framework and objectives of medieval studies in Bulgaria twisted the logic of inquiry and produced numerous utterly biased unhistorical interpretations bordering on absurdity. Instead of being primary material for exploration, medieval sources and documents were often used as illustrations to the Marxist-Leninist doctrine. The chief periodical, *Istoricheski pregled*, played an active part in this process. A typical case is an article published in 1945 by Alexander Burmov under the title “Feudalism in Bulgaria.” Using selected quotations from the Marxist-Leninist classics, combined with a contrived attempt to illustrate them with examples from Bulgarian historical documents, the author tried to prove the obvious—the existence of a “feudal order in Bulgaria”—and to subject its development to general social laws postulated by the Marxist-Leninist doctrine. He also criticized some Bulgarian historians who had failed to recognize the “correct” logic of medieval history in Bulgaria, and whose work was off the party line.²⁰

In 1946, at a national conference of historians, Georgi Dimitrov, the leader of the Bulgarian Communist Party, assigned great ideological significance to historical studies: “We need our own Marxist philosophy of our [Bulgarian] history like bread and air,” he pontificated. In 1948, the national convention of Bulgarian historians disparaged V. N. Zlatarski and P. Nikov as typical exponents of “philological formalism” with its characteristic “methodological uncertainties,” whereas P. Mutafčiev was denounced as the expounder of idealist, nationalist, and fascist ideas. The reverberations in the press of such ideological branding were even more violent.

The forcible ideologization of historical studies during the 1950s was manifested in the general surveys of Bulgarian medieval history. Generations of students and of the general public went through those schematic and dull

²⁰ Александър Бурмов. *Избрани произведения*. София 1968, I: 203.

constructs, which were full of anachronistic pseudo-Marxist terminology and which sought phenomena and processes of socio-economic nature that were irrelevant to medieval Bulgaria.²¹ In the late 1950s and early 1960s, this blind dogmatic approach and slavery to hackneyed clichés began gradually to be surmounted. The works of such esteemed Russian-Soviet Byzantinists as Alexander P. Kazhdan (1920–1997) and Gennady G. Litavrin (1925–2010), who devoted studies to the socioeconomic, political, and cultural history of Byzantium and medieval Bulgaria, were like a breath of fresh air and exercised strong influence among Bulgarian scholars. In the early 1970s the works of the most distinguished Bulgarian medievalists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were republished—a development which ensured certain intellectual continuity among the different generations of scholars. Interest in the Bulgarian Middle Ages was significantly stimulated in the late 1970s by the national campaign for the commemoration of the 1300th anniversary of the founding of the Bulgarian state. The celebrations involved series of events and publications which strengthened the prestige of Bulgarian medieval studies. The first two volumes of the multi-volume *History of Bulgaria*, published in 1981–1982, marked an important departure from the dogmatic approach found in general surveys up to that point. The edition was co-authored by almost all leading Bulgarian medievalists. Its emphasis on socio-political and cultural history set a new trend, shaped largely in response to a shift in the policies of the then-ruling Bulgarian Communist Party and the adoption of a moderate kind of nationalism by the intellectuals of the younger generation, who rallied around Lyudmila Zhivkova (1942–1981), a key political and cultural functionary and the daughter of Bulgarian communist leader Todor Zhivkov. Indeed, by the late 1970s the outdated Marxist-Leninist dogmatism of the generation that had adapted to the regime was gradually fading into history. It is during that time that medieval studies began to shed their ideological fetters and look to new subject areas. The comprehensive volume on the history of medieval Bulgaria written in 1999 by I. Božilov and V. Gjuzelev marked the definitive rupture with the onerous legacy of Marxist-Leninist socialism that had characterized the preceding decades. By giving prominence to political history, it ushered in the return to the roots of post-Liberation medieval studies. It also cast the history of Bulgarian medieval

²¹ This tendency is particularly conspicuous in the first volumes of the two-volume and three-volume general histories of Bulgaria, published by the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in 1954 and 1962, respectively.

culture and ecclesiastical and state institutions in fresh light.

Seen from the point of view of institutionalization of medieval studies in Bulgaria, the period after 1944 brought some signs of a positive renewal: an increased number of specialists in the centers for historical research, systematic approach in long-term research projects, and growing emphasis on the study of primary sources. The surge of new academic institutions and research units with focus on medieval history during that period is remarkable. At the Institute of Bulgarian History (est. 1947) of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS), a Section for Medieval History of Bulgaria was set up, the main objective of which was to track down, translate, and publish Greek and Latin sources. Similar programs in medieval studies were also established at other institutes of the Academy, including the Institute for Literature, the Institute for Bulgarian Language, the Institute for Art History, and the Institute for Music Studies, as well as the Institute for Balkan Studies founded in 1966. As a result, the leadership that the St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia had enjoyed in the field of medieval studies was now taken over by the various institutes of the Academy. The establishment of the University of Veliko Tŭrnovo (1963) and the affiliates of the Archaeological Museum in Veliko Tŭrnovo and Shumen (1976) led to the formation of regional medievalist centers. The Manuscript Department at the St. Cyril and St. Methodius National Library also became an active unit in the study of medieval manuscripts. Another advancement in medieval studies was the establishment of the Cyrillo-Methodian Research Center at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in 1980. In 1986 the Center for Slavo-Byzantine Studies was founded, in affiliation with the University of Sofia. The Center, named after the late Bulgarian medievalist Ivan Dujčev, has a manuscript collection, a rapidly expanding specialized library, and its own series of publications.

Parallel to the establishment of new institutions dedicated to medieval studies after the war, a number of specialized periodicals and series appeared, which have acquired both local and international renown. Among these are *Byzantinobulgarica*, *Kirilometodievski studii* [Cyrillo-Methodian Studies], *Palaeobulgarica*, *Pliska–Preslav*, *Starobŭlgarska literatura* [Old Bulgarian Literature], and *Tsarevgrad Tŭrnov*. Research on medieval subjects is also published in regional university yearbooks and established academic periodicals, such as *Istoricheski pregled* [Historical Review], *Archaeologia*, and *Études balcaniques*, among others. Unfortunately, the lack of comprehensive bibliographical reference guides of recent periodicals and the

boom in historical publications in the last few decades make it increasingly difficult to follow the development of the discipline.

The prestige of medieval studies during the later decades of the twentieth century can be largely credited to the unprecedented scale of research in archaeology and philology. Both disciplines brought to a light significant amount of new material about the history and culture of medieval Bulgaria. Among the remarkable achievements of Bulgarian archaeology are the excavations at the old capitals of Pliska, Veliki Preslav, and Tŭrnovo, and a number of medieval strongholds, settlements, and necropolises which provided insight into everyday medieval life and invited lively scholarly debates.²² The erudite synthetic works of Krŭstyo Mijatev (1892–1966), devoted to medieval Bulgarian architecture, and of Stancho Vaklinov (1921–1978) on early Bulgarian material culture, were the result of many years of field work.²³

Perhaps the most promising development in medieval studies in Bulgaria during the late twentieth century has been the systematic collections of source material about Bulgarian history. Never before had such abundant, diverse and valuable source material been made accessible to specialists and the general public. These projects have paved the way for future advanced studies. An outstanding contribution to the current corpus of historical texts has been the series *Izvori na bŭlgarskata istoriya* [Sources of Bulgarian History], presenting a comprehensive, multi-volume (eighteen so far) edition of Greek and Latin documents about medieval Bulgaria.²⁴ Compiled by members of the Section for Medieval History at the Institute for Bulgarian History, the volumes incorporate the efforts of different generations of Bulgarian medievalists. The increasing importance of textual sources is also attested by the numerous critical editions of works by renowned men of letters in medieval Bulgaria that have been published, as well as editions of individual literary works from the period. These include the edition of the works of

²² For publications on excavations made until 1966, see В. Велков, С. Георгиева. *Библиография на бŭлгарската археология (1879–1966)*. София 1974.

²³ Кръстьо Миятев. *Архитектурата в средновековна Бŭлгария*. София 1965; Станчо Ваклинов. *Формиране на старобŭлгарската култура VI–XI век*. София 1977.

²⁴ *Гръцки извори за бŭлгарската история (ГИБИ, Greek Sources on Bulgarian History)* 11 тома, София 1954–1994; *Латински извори за бŭлгарската история (ЛИБИ, Latin Sources on Bulgarian History)* 5 тома. София 1958–2001.

Clement of Ohrid (d. 916); the discovery and publication of new works of Bishop Konstantin Preslavski (late ninth–early tenth century); the edition of the *Law for Judging People* (late ninth century); the analytical study and classification of the apocalyptic-historical works in Old Bulgarian literature and the marginal notes of men of letters from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries; the complete edition of the works of Konstantin Kostenechki (d. 1431); and published volume of the Bulgarian Anonymous Chronicle of the fifteenth century. A compendium of Old Bulgarian written musical works has also been published for the first time, filling a substantial gap in source studies.²⁵ Several exemplary catalogs of collections of ancient Greek and Slavic manuscripts from the St. Cyril and St. Methodius National Library, the Library of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and from Rila and Zograph monasteries, among others, have been compiled.²⁶ Old Bulgarian manuscripts in numerous foreign book depositories were cataloged.

The substantial increase of diverse sources, the *instrumenta studiorum*, on medieval Bulgaria, their integration into the research process, and their wide dissemination may rightly be considered the greatest achievement in Bulgarian medieval studies of the second half of the twentieth century. These sources have allowed the discipline to embark upon a new phase in research and have provided a more integral perception of medieval Bulgarian civilization. An impressive wealth of Old Bulgarian and Byzantine numismatic and sphragistic monuments is now also available in expertly compiled compendia.²⁷ The recent publications of the Proto-Bulgarian inscriptions in Greek and of Old Bulgarian Glagolitic and Cyrillic epigraphic monuments have furnished authentic and extremely valuable written material.²⁸ Those

²⁵ Стоян Петров, Христо Кодов. *Старобългарски музикални паметници*. София 1973.

²⁶ For a bibliography of such catalogs, see Гюзелев, *Апология на Средновековието*, 153–154.

²⁷ Тодор Герасимов. *Антични и средновековни монети в България*. София 1975; Йорданка Юркова, Владимир Пенчев. *Български средновековни печати и монети*. София 1990; Иван Йорданов. *Печатите от стратегията Преслав (971–1088)*. София 1993; idem. *Корпус на печатите на Средновековна България*. София 2001.

²⁸ Veselin Beschevliev. *Die protobulgarischen Inschriften*. Berlin 1963; Веселин Бешевлиев. *Първобългарски надписи*. София 1979 (1992); Альбина Медынцева, Казимир Попконстантинов. *Надписи из Круглой церкви в Преславе*. София 1984; Стефан Смядовски. *Българска кирилска епиграфика IX–XV век*. София 1993; Otto Kronsteiner, Kazimir Popkonstantinov. *Старобългарски надписи / Altbulgarische Inschriften. (Die slawischen Sprachen, Band 36)*. Wien 1994.

advances in Slavic paleography, codicology, epigraphics, and sphragistics are truly representative of the notable achievements and discoveries of Bulgarian medieval studies.

The thematic range of the studies of the Bulgarian Middle Ages in the first decades after the Second World War was dramatically affected by the imposed communist ideology. Yet, a number of studies conducted during that period made significant contributions to the field and still hold their value today. Two monographs, the first dedicated to social and economic relations in Macedonia, and the second to the medieval Bulgarian town, stand apart with their impressive erudition and creative approaches.²⁹ Archaeological discoveries and excavations conducted on a large scale stimulated studies of particular towns, strongholds, and urban/rural agglomerations. These studies demonstrate originality and indicate an attempt to systematize research findings and establish continuity in the historical processes that shaped medieval Bulgarian settlements.³⁰ Formulaic studies of class struggle, which had been prescribed by the political ideology, produced little of value. However, the investigation of socio-religious teachings and movements led to the publication of insightful studies on the Bogomil doctrine and its diffusion in Europe during the medieval period.³¹ The interest in the institution of the ruler as well as the offices and positions of authority in the medieval Bulgarian khanate/kingdoms, produced series of excellent publications.³² Another thread of exemplary studies follows the genesis and formation of the

²⁹ Димитър Ангелов. *Аграрните отношения в Северна и Средна Македония през XIV в.* София 1958; Страшимир Лишев. *Българският средновековен град.* София 1970.

³⁰ Александър Кузев, Васил Гюзелев, съст. *Български средновековни градове и крепости.* т. I: *Градове и крепости по р. Дунав и Черно море.* Варна 1981.

³¹ Димитър Ангелов, Борислав Примов, Георги Батаклиев. *Богомилството в България, Византия и Западна Европа в извори.* София 1967; Димитър Ангелов. *Богомилството в България.* София 1969; Борислав Примов. *Бугрите—Книга за поп Богомил и неговите последователи.* София 1970.

³² Иван Билярски. *Институциите на средновековна България. Второ българско царство (XII–XIV век).* София 1998; Васил Гюзелев. „Функциите и ролята на кавхана в живота на Първата българска държава (VII–XI в.)”. *ГСУ (ФИФ) 60/3 (1967), 131–157*; Васил Гюзелев. *Кавханите и ичиргу боилите в българското канство-царство (VII–XI в.).* Пловдив, 2007; Иван Венедиков. *Военното и административното устройство на България през IX и X век.* София 1979; Георги Бакалов. *Средновековният български владетел. Титулатура и инсигнии.* София 1985.,

medieval Bulgarian nationality, a topic first broached by V. N. Zlatarski.³³ Several valuable monographs examined particular reigns and addressed Bulgaria's relations with other medieval states and ethnic groups.³⁴ Besides the major contribution made in this area by I. Dujčev, in his numerous studies and articles, there are the erudite prosopographical studies of I. Božilov on the Asenid dynasty and the Bulgarian presence in the Byzantine Empire: both will surely endure in the annals of historical research.³⁵

The ideological, thematic, and methodological transformations in Bulgarian medieval studies preceded the political changes in the fall of communism in 1989. Yet the restrictions imposed by the straight jacket of Marxist-Leninist ideology and the severe limitations on the mobility of scholars and ideas before 1989 left vast areas in the history of medieval Bulgaria underexplored. The current state of medieval research in Bulgaria is the subject of another article. By way of conclusion I would like to outline some of the essentials necessary for the education and research of the next generation of Bulgarian medievalists. First, there is the necessity of a specialized manual for undergraduate and graduate students, which would provide a convenient and up to date orientation in the diverse areas of medieval Bulgarian history and culture. Second, the publication of a systematic bibliography of medieval studies in Bulgaria is needed. Third, we lack both a manual on Old Bulgarian paleography and epigraphy and a compilation of an authoritative reference work on medieval Bulgarian letters and literary culture. All this notwithstanding, I would like to conclude with the succinct Latin dictum: *in principio sunt fontes*. Much remains to be done in the collecting and publication of written and material sources about medieval Bulgaria, bringing new material to the discipline. *Futura sunt in manibus hominum scientiae*.

³³ Васил Златарски. „Образуване на българската народност”. *Българска историческа библиотека*, 1/1 (1928), 74-112; Димитър Ангелов. *Образуване на българската народност*. София 1971; Петър Ангелов. *България и българите в представите на византийците*. София 1999.

³⁴ For extensive bibliography, see Гюзелев, *Апология на Средновековието*, 157, no. 177.

³⁵ Иван Божилов. *Фамилията на Асеневици (1186–1460). Генеалогия и просография*. София 1985; idem. *Българите във Византийската империя*. София 1995.



RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF MEDIEVAL STATE IDEOLOGY IN THE EUROPEAN SOUTHEAST

Georgi Bakalov

In Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, the ideas of statehood, sovereignty, and a hierarchical arrangement of powers were most often justified with religious arguments.¹The reason for that, despite inevitable differences between specific political ideologies, was the general acceptance of the principle of divine origin of power.

In earlier societies, supreme power and its bearers were usually at the heart of mythological interpretations that, albeit by other means of expression, sustained such an ideology of power. It was articulated more clearly in societies professing monotheistic religions and the fundamental principles of undivided authority, harmony, and the order of the universe. This was particularly true in the late Roman Empire and early Byzantium, where the concept of the divine origin of power was fully developed. Proceeding from this premise, this paper will look primarily at the state ideology of Byzantium; however, insofar as the medieval Bulgarian Empire was part of *Pax Orthodoxa*, developments may be inferred by analogy.

The debate about the ideas of power and sovereignty was introduced in its current vein in Early Modern Times, when the fashionable rationalistic concepts of the day suppressed medieval providentialism. Jean Bodin (1530–1596), the founder of the modern theory of sovereignty, paid special attention to the property the ruler assumed as the fruit of conquest; the prince governed his subjects “just as the head of a household is the master of his slaves.”² For the Western frame of mind, Bodin claimed, property was primal and inviolable. The lawful holder of sovereignty respected the property of his

¹ First published as: Г. Бакалов. „Религиозни аспекти на държавната идеология в средновековна България“. In: *Религия и църква в България. Социални и културни измерения в православieto и неговата специфика в българските земи*. София 1999.

² Б. Гаврилов. „Държавата – това съм аз!“ Абсолютизмът в епохата на „стария режим“. *История*, 1–2/4 (1997), 4.

subjects: this set him apart from the despots of the Eastern persuasion that trampled it for personal gain.

The pioneers of the Enlightenment proposed the theory of public law as an alternative to the medieval *ius divinum*.³ On this basis they sought arguments about the origin of power and sovereignty in the so-called “social contract” and the public exercise of supreme power. Quite naturally, the still strong traditions of medieval religious thinking opposed such ideas. The proponent of rejection was the British king James I Stuart (1603–1625), who could have borrowed his words from the Byzantine doctrinaires: “Monarchy is the supreme thing on Earth because... they [the kings] are not only God’s lieutenants upon earth and sit upon God’s throne, but even by God himself they are called Gods.”⁴

Similar views were expressed in France, the other great European monarchy with definitive authority on political ideas. In the *Instruction pour le Dauphin*, written between 1666 and 1667 by Louis XIV, “the Sun King rebuked for being imperfect any system that would imply division or sharing of power with another individual or institution. Just like in England, a desire is evident to represent the prince as God’s vicar whose single measure of lawful governance is his own conscience.”⁵ The thrust of the king’s memoir was the complete identification between the state and its ruler. Apparently, the idea of autocracy, or autarchy, initiated by the late Roman Empire and elaborated in Byzantium, had a powerful appeal. Essentially a uniform faith for sovereigns east and west, Christianity dominated political ideas until the dawn of the modern era.

From a Christian perspective, the harmony between the spiritual and the secular principles rested on Gospel wisdom: “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s” (*Matthew*: 22:21). This was a guiding principle in the life of the ancient church, supported by other common themes in the Gospels: “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor” (*Romans* 13:7). Furthermore, Christians must obey every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: “whether it be to the king as supreme;

³ *Op. cit.*, 4.

⁴ James I. *The Political Works of James I.* Cambridge, Mass. 1918, 307.

⁵ Гаврилов, *op. cit.*, 6.

or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him... for there is no power but of God” (*Peter 2:13,14,17; Romans 13:1, et passim*).

The first Christians believed that the church and the state were two genuinely different institutions that had different aims, natures, and structure; they were not mutually exclusive, nor antagonistic, but supplementary. This concept informed the notion of the church as a theanthropic institution called to lead the believers along the way to salvation and the achievement of the ultimate ideal, the Kingdom of God.⁶ The state, for its part, was an instrument designed to ensure social organization and prosperity, to restrain sinful propensities, and to check the anarchist tendencies inherent in every human society.

The apotheosis of power as a foundation of the Byzantine doctrine of governance had its roots in the pagan world. Both Greece and Rome had developed punctilious and sophisticated forms of political interaction between worship and governance, as well as outstanding theories and brilliant examples of political rhetoric. Athens during the fifth century BCE, Rome during the first and second centuries BCE, and especially the deliberations of Aristotle, Plato, Polybius, Pericles, Demosthenes, and Cato were all cases in point.

At the end of Antiquity, most of their theories had fallen in decay or were giving way to new currents dictated by a changing world. Already in the second century BCE in the Hellenistic kingdoms, and roughly a century later in Rome, the assemblies of citizens started to disappear; the practice of elective office was abandoned and political debate was banned. Unlimited power was gradually becoming the norm, sanctioned by its allegedly divine origin.

Deification was a mythological image that was established in pagan Rome in parallel to the hierarchy of the gods. Its foundation was the reverence to *pater familias* who was deified posthumously. This explained the popular idea of Rome as an “extended family,” where the cult to *pater patriae* (the emperor) was held in high esteem. It became formal practice under Augustus and his successors, who planted the seeds of the imperial institution. In its own ways, the cult took hold of public consciousness and in the following centuries branched out into a neat, well-built system reinforced by the now

⁶ Т. Събев. *Самостояйна народностна църква в средновековна България*. София 1987, 337.

dominant Christian monism.⁷

In the quest to identify the religious aspects of state ideology in later Christian societies we should not lose sight of the fact that the state, being a peculiar social organism, was the nursing child of both Roman jurisprudence and Eastern despotism. In this light, Sergey Bulgakov was right to argue that Byzantium invested enormous efforts to close the gap between canon and civil law – and failed. A similar development was to take place in pre-modern Russia. Russia boasts many of the endearing features of Orthodox social welfare, but there, too, one cannot escape the thick layer of natural paganism, whereas the heart of Russian statehood beats simultaneously with the drums of Prussian etatism and Asian despotism. The Byzantinized Russian Orthodox Empire was an ideological phenomenon akin to the Holy Roman Empire: it was only a symbol of what it should be rather than what it is.⁸

According to Louis Bréhier, the impetus to formulate political ideas in a Christian political relation came from the West, but their rendering in a completed form was an accomplishment of Byzantine theorists. Paradoxically, Byzantine literature as we know it offers no works specifically dedicated to the subject. Johannes Karayannopoulos has pointed out as the most reliable source the anonymous *Περὶ πολιτικῆς ἐπιστιμῆς*. In Rome, the gods and the emperors shared the same title: *augusti*. The allusion of equality perceived allegiance or opposition to the imperial regime as respect or disrespect to the gods (the one God of the Christian era), thus shaping the inevitable religious aspect of power and its agent, the state ideology. For the early Christians of pagan times, who were not yet involved in governance and were even branded as its ideological foes, the cult of the emperors was an act of unacceptable idolatry. At the same time, the Roman state ideology acknowledged that the emperor stood last in the hierarchy of the gods, but was first among men.⁹

Deification of power commonly regards the ruler as an intermediary between God and man. The apotheosis of the emperor's person was seen by the Roman state tradition as a religious sanction of power that aimed to bolster, and make holy and sacrosanct, the ruling order. The later Christian

⁷ Г. Бакалов. *Византия. Културно-политически очерци*. София 1993, 325–6.

⁸ С. Булгаков. *Православието. Очерци върху учението на Православната църква*. София 1994, 262.

⁹ Бакалов, *op. cit.*, 326.

interpretation deified not the emperor's person, but the power vested in his hands. By extension, the prerogative of deification spread beyond the actual person of the emperor, for instance, to the administrative and bureaucratic apparatus involved in government. Opinions were expressed that, just as God governed the universe, the emperor governed the human community and personified order on Earth. The ultimate evolution of this belief postulated that royal power was an emanation of God's will, not to be contested by any worldly institution.

The idea of the empire as embodiment of *Pax Christiana*, launched by the architect of the Byzantine political doctrine, Eusebius of Caesarea, was essentially borrowed from the church, which in turn had modeled its views on the Scriptures.¹⁰ Thus, the Roman concept of governance became synonymous with Christian ethics. Thomas Aquinas, the theorist of Roman Catholic theology, also shared the theory of theonomic royal power. Like Eusebius, he added that "God's grace of power" was not granted for life. It could be withdrawn under certain circumstances because the king, being himself mortal, was not immune to error. No matter how the Holy Ghost would decide to lift his tutelage, by civil riot or through usurpation, the king's toppling from power could only happen by God's will. This remarkable elasticity of thought and ensuing action is one of the reasons for the theoretical resilience of the Byzantine state and monarchy.

It may seem far-fetched, but these ideas correspond with the notion of the "God's chosen people." In the times before the kings of Israel, the Jewish people were governed by patriarchs who received orders directly from Yahweh. In later years, the offspring of Jacob were governed by monarchs in everything but the crown, for this was the role and function of the judges of Israel. In this early period of their written history, the Jews deliberately steered clear from royal power in order to preserve the specific outlook of their social structure and to demonstrate that they were led by the God of Abraham, Jacob, and Isaac. Theirs was a theocratic monarchy in its most accomplished form, but as time passed, it became abundantly clear that Yahweh could not directly govern the Jews because governance requires violence. Violence is alien to God, however, because God acts only within the measure of one's devotion.

Monarchists of all times have often relied on the following passage from

¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, 327-8.

the Old Testament: “Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us. That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles. And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the Lord. And the Lord said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king.” (*1 Samuel* 8: 19–22) These lines, worn thin by the numerous interpretations of Christian canonists, lay down the Biblical foundation and principles of royal power. The most important observation is that the people of their own accord desired to have a king who would speak God’s will; the king is therefore a mediator between his people and God. Consequently, monarchy was not established by force but was a covenant. God only interfered to designate the people’s leader. However, the king was a mortal being, no different than the next man, so God bestowed upon him special grace to help him fulfill his mission. The practical gesture of grace was the act of anointment. It reinforced the notion that theonomic royal power was accepted freely and consciously by the people.

The Christians borrowed from the Jews the idea that God graced with divinity not the emperor’s person, but the power he exercised. Within this context, power was seen in several different aspects: the power of man over nature (*Genesis* 1:28), of man over woman (*Genesis* 3:16), and of parents over their children (*Leviticus* 19:3).

After their official recognition by the church at the beginning of the fourth century, the concepts of power embedded in the Old and the New Testaments were elaborated by the Christian canonists. Their writings transformed the Roman-Byzantine emperor into the principal Christian ruler who alone had legitimate power “granted to him by God.” As long as the emperor was the bearer of supreme power and the “breathing image of God,” he was sacrosanct: any attempt on his person constituted a capital crime and a deadly sin. Byzantine and Latin writers advanced the thesis of power as public good whose specific manifestation was the “service to God.” “By reigning, you serve the Lord, and you serve the Lord by reigning,” Pope Leo I wrote to the emperor Marcianus (450–457).¹¹ The emperor had to be mindful of how he used the power granted by God. He could maintain his position in relation to the Almighty God as long as he respected the basic tenets of Christian ethics. In this sense, he did not represent unlimited authority like the

¹¹ Mansi.VI. 305; PL. 54. 1111 A.

eastern despots; he was immersed in the idea “to serve” his state and people. This was the dictate of his divine power and the reason why he could call himself “Christ’s vicar on earth.”¹² In the context of Christian eschatology, this meant that the emperor was only a temporary vicar of God until the day of the Second Coming of “the King of Heaven.”¹³

Parallel to these concepts, Byzantine sources continued to display the cosmopolitan views of Old Rome, where the emperor was “the best” choice elected by the “armed men.”¹⁴ This dualism about the origins of imperial power, at once “granted by God” and “granted by the people,” was a defining feature of Byzantine thought. It reflected the well known inclination to base statehood on the Roman tradition, while phrasing its motivations in the terms of Orthodox Christianity. A good example of the dualism that combined Roman pagan practices with the new moral standards of Christianity was the custom of the eparchy administrations to hang imperial portraits in their premises.¹⁵

Nonetheless, the Byzantine and Roman traditions exhibited substantial differences. Whereas in Rome the images were part of the emperor’s personal cult, in Byzantium the same thing carried only political overtones, being an expression of loyalty and devotion on the part of the emperor’s subjects.¹⁶ Johannes Karayannopoulos adds an interesting remark: Christian writers explained that the Byzantines’ peculiar custom of venerating such images was directed not so much at the emperor’s person as at the sacred regalia in his hands. “The act of *proskynesis* (prostration),” St. Ambrose argued, “venerates the cross of Christ personified by the emperor. Therefore, bowing to the emperor is not impertinent unto God; on the contrary, it is an act of piety because by so bowing, we reflect on the holy symbol of redemption.”¹⁷

Constantine the Great, who is regarded as the founder of the Christian imperial cult, was thinking along the same lines. When a bishop remarked

¹² Й. Караянопулос. *Политическата теория на византийците*. София 1992, 36.

¹³ F. Dölger. “Bulgarisches Cartum und byzantinisches Kaisertum.” In: *Byzanz und die europäische Staatenwelt*. Ettal 1953, 140–58.

¹⁴ E. Demougeot. *De l’unité à la division de l’empire romain*. Paris 1951, 5.

¹⁵ L. Bréhier, P. Batiffol. *Les survivances du cult imperial romain*. Paris 1920, 35.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁷ Караянопулос, *op. cit.*, 19.

that the emperor would “sit next to God and reign with Him,” Constantine said he had no other desire, neither then nor in the future, but to be deemed “one of God’s slaves.”¹⁸ This distinction is important in light of the later attitude adopted by the Byzantine emperors: unlike the Roman and Hellenistic “autocrat and God,” the first Christian emperor became “emperor and slave.” The other rulers of the Byzantine Orthodox commonwealth followed suit in their official practice.

The proclaimed duties to the people to some extent limited the scope of imperial power. In order to cut short their dependence, the Byzantine emperors adopted an exteriorized, solemn, and awe-inspiring coronation ceremony that created a supernatural feeling. The ceremony was introduced by emperor Justinian (527–565), an ambitious ruler who, after being terrified with the scale of popular discontent during the Nika riot (532), was no longer inclined to maintain the illusion of “power by the people.” The idea of divine power that was accountable only to “Christ, King of Heaven,” was much more convenient.

The church itself insisted on drawing parallels between Christ and king. It instilled the notion that Jesus Christ was the paragon of earthly rulers. That was not a political idea shaped by transient realities, but a new concept grounded in theology and borrowed from the Scriptures in order to portray the metaphorical image of the “meek king.” A somewhat loose interpretation would read in this the image of the moral, God-abiding king who would strictly respect and honor the freedoms of his subjects. The Orthodox utopia went even further, making the emperor a saint whose mandate was to bring the “Kingdom of God” on earth: a change that transformed the power of the sword into the power of love, thus laying bare the quintessential message of the Christian doctrine.

The Western interpretation of imperial power was somewhat different. The Holy Roman Empire similarly entertained the notion of the emperor as a “vicar of Christ,” but it never materialized in reality. Feudal and dynastic strife tied the hands of the Western emperor, who, on top of his other concerns, had to share his high power with the Pope in Rome. The theory of the “two swords,” whereby the pontiff in Rome could make or break monarchs, was never embraced by the Byzantine Orthodox commonwealth. Contrary to

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 19–20.

Catholic practice, which kept the emperor away from the clergy and the cult, the Eastern Church granted him the rights of a minor cleric with exceptional prerogatives. Technically, he was even considered as an "external bishop" of the church. The difference was that, by entering the ranks of ecclesiastical hierarchy, the emperor obtained a charismatic nimbus.

Closer parallels to the Byzantine Orthodox tradition can be found in the institution of the Arab caliph. Islam is a universal religion, according to which the master of the faithful is their ruler and priest (caliph). Elevation, however, stopped there. The Islamic tradition never saw the sultan, khan or caliph as the vicar of Allah. He was not an earthly likeness of God, but only a God-inspired chief priest.

In addition to the official propaganda of divine royal power, Byzantium produced other voices, too. Even though they stayed in the realm of private opinion, they are quite interesting, especially when coming from a major figure such as Patriarch Photios (858–867; 877–886). No less a statesman than he was patriarch, Photios was known for his appeal to attain a "symphony of powers," a shared sovereignty of patriarch and emperor; his persistent pressure managed to plant this idea in the draft of the extensive law code preceded by the *Epanagogue*. The sway of caesaropapism, however, deeply seated in Byzantine political practice, thwarted the patriarch's dream of symphony. The idea of "divine power" proved much stronger; it never encompassed the "two parts of the body: the emperor and the patriarch," but only the crown-bearing, God-anointed emperor of the Romans.¹⁹

All these ideas raise a central question about the relations between the state and the church. As early as the fourth century, the church became both a sanction and a conceptual inspiration of political theories, building a case for the religious aspects of medieval state ideologies. In the most general terms, at stake were the ties between the earthly, visible part of the "Kingdom of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit," and the "kingdom of the Caesars." As Igor Medvedev puts it, these were "two inseparable organisms joined together by the metaphysical bondage of mystic union." Perhaps the most accurate commentary was formulated by Emperor John Tzimiskes (969–976). In a

¹⁹ Бакалов, *op. cit.*, 322–32. See also the juridical and canonical codes treating this subject: the Sixth Novel of Justinian, the Ecloga and the Syntagma of Matthew Blastares (*Codex Iustinianus*, lib. 1, tit. 1, 7; *Iustiniani Novellae*, III, V–VII, XVI, XLII, LXXIX).

speech before the Senate he said: "I know that there is only one power, most sublime and presiding, that has created all things visible and invisible in this world out of nothing. But I know, too, that in this life, in the real space of the earth, there are two powers, the priesthood and the statehood. God charged one with the care of the soul and the other with the care of the peoples' bodies, so that none of the two should come to harm, but both be preserved unharmed."²⁰

This passage from the emperor's speech was not simply a rhetorical piece. It interpreted the division of the two main powers according to the Sixth Novel of Justinian and Title 18 of the *Epanagogue*, which laid the legal foundations for the relations between the two supreme authorities. It should be noted that although the emperor was a member of the church and the patriarch was a citizen of the empire, for all practical purposes, the state had a dominant role. Regardless of all tentative pacts about equality, the clerics often endured the "yoke of secular power." This not infrequently provoked the sharp response of prominent ecclesiastical figures, not least among them being St. John of Damascus. Without prevarication, the authoritative ecclesiastical writer stated that the laymen would obey the emperor in everything concerning secular life, but the affairs of the church were the concern of ecclesiastical councils. The renowned reformer of Byzantine monasticism, St. Theodore of Stoudios (ninth century) took a similar stance: "As far as the church is concerned, it is within the competence of priests and teachers; befitting to the emperor is the management of affairs outside the church. The apostle has likewise prescribed: 'And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers...' [1 Cr 12:28] There is no mention of emperors there."²¹

The attitude of the church to the state was different in different periods. A popular metaphor was that the early church in the pagan Roman Empire regarded the state as a "beast with a crown, and upon his head the name of blasphemy." This "kingdom of the beast" waged war on saints and subjected the church to persecution. For a long time it was met with nothing but unrelenting opposition and eschatological sentiment. Nonetheless, the state was accepted in its historical dimensions. The transition from eschatology to historicism can be traced in the epistles of Apostle Paul, especially in the much cited passage in Romans 13 where, in the face of Nero's magistrates,

²⁰ Лев Дякон. *История*. Под ред. на Г. Г. Литаврин. Москва 1988, 55.

²¹ PG, vol. 99, coll. 181 D 184.

the apostle stated: “There is no power but of God.”

The Old and the New Testaments implied that the Kingdom of God would doom the pagan world and the state, which was one of its key constituents. When the state “took refuge in the shadow of the Cross,” the church modified its attitude. It showered the head of the empire with the gifts of salvation, anointed him, and ordained him to serve a just cause. The new “groom” of the Church (the emperor) followed the high example of Christ himself. As he betrothed the cross, so did the empire. In spite of its entrenchment later on, caesaropapism was perceived as abuse and never gained dogmatic foundations.²²

Having invested the Christian ruler with charismatic functions, the church fashioned rules for his veneration. The figure of the emperor exemplified the submission of the state before the cross and by extension, the building of the Kingdom of God on earth. This laid the foundation of the Byzantine thesis of supremacy: the earthly likeness of the Kingdom of Heaven was none other but the Byzantine Empire because Constantine the Great had made Christianity a state religion. Byzantium was therefore summoned to bring together all Christians and become an ecumenical empire. The emperor’s archetype was Christ, the single head of the Church of Heaven, and he ruled his entrusted people “in Christ,” not “from” or “by” Christ. According to this line of reasoning, the only holy and gracious will was the will of God; it alone was able to materialize on earth. The Christian monarchy drew its energy from God’s law (Θεονόμος) chosen not by the people, but by God himself. According to the official ideology, unlike his pagan counterparts, the Christian emperor possessed no right of initiative in government: he was a direct executor of God’s will.

* * *

In terms of concepts, tradition, and attitude, much of the above pertained to the state ideology of the medieval Bulgarian empire, which adopted the Byzantine confessional and ideological model and claimed a prestigious place in *Pax Orthodoxa*. That religion played no part in state ideology during the pre-Christian pagan period would certainly be an understatement. Its

²² Булгаков, *op. cit.*, 259.

influence, insofar as we can detect it in unrelated fragmentary evidence, was expressed in specific religious dictums. It was implied, for instance, in the khan's formulaic title "from God ruler" attested in several stone inscriptions from pagan times.²³

The scarce source evidence does not permit a summary assumption to be made about the entire pagan period. The formula $\acute{\omicron}$ $\acute{\epsilon}$ κ θεοῦ ἄρχων (from God ruler) first appeared in a stone inscription from 822. It is not attested in earlier inscriptions of Khan Omurtag.²⁴ Its appearance in the 820s was clearly the result of Khan Krum's military triumphs of 811–814, which catapulted Bulgaria among the strong players in Southeastern Europe. The intentional defiance of the Byzantine proclamations of sovereignty, allegedly reserved for the emperor in Constantinople, was another powerful motivation. Nevertheless, the marriage of state ideology and religion was not a Christian invention: it was common practice in ancient societies. It did, however, provide the most pervasive argument of the Christian doctrine of governance, proclaiming the incontestable dogmatic union between the state and the church.²⁵

The conversion to Christianity in 864–865 brought the religious situation in Bulgaria to a new level. A universal confessional system was put in place, whose monadic nature was concurrent with the centralizing ambitions of the Bulgarian rulers. The newly established church sanctioned the divine nature of their power and laid the foundations of a synergy that remained intact until the end of the medieval Bulgarian empire. Along with the required liturgical books, one of the first translations was the Greek *Steering Book*, or the *Pydalion*, whose content essentially covered the Byzantine collection of canon and secular law known as the *Nomokanon*. The *Steering Book* stated: "Two great gifts were bestowed by the Almighty God to man, the gifts of priesthood and statehood." The interpretation of this premise in the aforementioned speech delivered by John Tzimiskes to the Senate clarified that the priesthood was charged with the care of all things divine, whereas secular power was tasked with all things human. Both gifts, however, "issued from the same source," and in this conjunction the dualism of the two

²³ Г. Бакалов. *Средновековният български владетел. (Титулатура и инсигнии)*. София 1985, 90.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ See Ал. Шмеман. *Догматический союз. Православная мысль*, 5 (1948), 12.

supreme powers “jointly ameliorates human life.”²⁶ The same argument was further elaborated in the *Syntagma* of Matthew Blastares: “The Emperor is the supreme legitimate power, the common good of all subjects... His actions must be guided by the Holy Scripture [and] the determinations of the Seven Ecumenical Councils.”²⁷

The act of anointment and the assumption of the crown “sealed” the God-chosen status of the Bulgarian prince and the implication that he was enthroned by God. With it and by it, the ruler was granted charisma and power over the elected people of God as well as “a royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2:9). Once he received this sacred acknowledgment, the prince (tsar) was granted power over his “in Christ named subjects” as well as the right to call himself “from God ruler of Bulgarians,” “pious,” “devout,” “Orthodox,” and “Christ-loving,” among other titles.²⁸ The identification of the prince (tsar) with the state and the enforcement of the Byzantine idea of monarchic centralism were the ultimate fruit of the theological and ideological precepts of the church and its liturgical sanction.²⁹ As in Byzantium, the church made sacred the power of the Bulgarian princes, who in turn approved its primacy. This was the dreamed-of triumph of the Byzantine “symphony of powers” warranted by the Bible and the theological idea of the harmony and the *taxis*, or order, of hierarchy.

The Council of Preslav in 918 was the first significant act of “symphony” and unison between the two institutions. The church was vested with patriarchal dignity, while Prince Symeon adopted the imperial title. Unfortunately, the evidence is so meager that certain scholars are inclined to challenge the historical legitimacy of this act. According to Vasil Zlatarski, after two crushing defeats inflicted on the Byzantine troops at Achelous and Katasyrtai in 917, Prince Symeon felt he had the right and grounds to demand acknowledgment from the incumbents in Byzantium who were to recognize him as their *autokrator*. Invoking the unwritten rule that “a tsar without a

²⁶ Протопр. Ст. Цанков. Държава и Църква. ГСУ БзФ, 8 (1931), 21–2; Р. Поптодоров. „Църква и държава през вековете.“ Ип: *Българската патриаршия през вековете*. София 1980, 150.

²⁷ И. Бердников. *Основные начала церковного права Православной церкви*. Казань 1902, 91.

²⁸ Бакалов, *op. cit.*, 171–4.

²⁹ Събев, *op. cit.*, 342.

patriarch is no good,” the prince first decided to elevate the dignity of the church in order to receive the supreme royal *ophikion* (officium) from the hand of its primate.³⁰ Zlatarski has made the following comment: “Direct evidence that the patriarchate in Bulgaria was established at that exact moment has not as yet been undiscovered.”³¹ The logic of events and the frequent habit of Bulgarian rulers to mimic Byzantine custom lead me to accept Zlatarski’s opinion, with the caveat that the act was not recognized by Byzantium and the international community. Nevertheless, it was performed in full canonical compliance with the spirit of the council principle professed by the church. The imperial coronation was performed by the head of the Bulgarian Church, Patriarch Leontius. In two surviving lead seals, Tsar Symeon was titled in Greek in the Byzantine manner with the titles: “Symeon in Christ, Emperor of the Romans” and “Symeon Emperor [protected by the] Mother of God.”³²

Judging by the subsequent course of events, Symeon was dissatisfied with the regional repercussions of his imperial claim. Inadequate foreign policy, ill-suited to the exigencies of the moment, left his status a sensitive and painful issue that remained open until the end of his illustrious reign.³³ The official acknowledgement of the highest imperial distinction did not come until the days of his son Peter (927–970). According to the peace treaty of October 927, Peter was granted the title “tsar” (βασιλεύς) and was included in the family hierarchy of Christian rulers as another “son.” The high rank of the ruler was preserved until the end of the medieval Bulgarian empire, despite its vicissitudes. The church and the state acted in synergy: the tsar ensured the ideological monopoly of the church, while the church hailed the empire as an earthly likeness of the “Kingdom of God” and the tsar as the “vicar of the Heavenly King Jesus.”

The conceptual justification of royal power after the Byzantine model was not received unequivocally in the newly converted country. The Bogomil movement, which emerged in the second quarter of the tenth century, attacked with equal zest the two supreme institutions. Ivan Dujčev has summed up this development: “[...] the indolence and ignorance of its spiritual leaders

³⁰ В. Н. Златарски. *История на българската държава през средните векове*. София 1971, 1: 2, 389.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Бакалов, *op.cit.*, 114.

³³ Ibid., 115–8.

drove the people to indulge in pagan distractions and superstition. The age of the Bulgarian enlightenment was coming to an end. [...] In many cases the professing of the Christian faith was stripped of any inward, spiritual meaning. The believers themselves were beginning to question some of the basic tenets of the Christian faith, such as the issue of the existence of evil.”³⁴

True to its time, the Bogomil teaching was quite archaic, but it spoke everyman’s language and appealed to all segments of society disaffected with the social reality and the moral corruption of the clergy. Even without denouncing the state, by criticizing the official church and its cult, sacredness, and mandate, the Bogomils questioned the sacrality of power, which was at the heart of the fundamental diarchy that shaped the ideology of medieval Christian societies. In this sense, the Bogomil movement was antithetic not only to the church, but also to the social order established with its ideological sanction.

In spite of a recent trend to overestimate the influence of Bogomils in Bulgarian society, the ultimate historical outcome shows that the Bogomil movement never dominated the scene strongly enough to change and model society according to its conceptual standards. It never became more than a social group that refused to accept the public pact between the church and the state, thereby denying the concept of holy and divine power.

The religiously grounded ideological and political principles established under the First Bulgarian Empire (681–1018) continued during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The Byzantine state and political traditions were faithfully reproduced and permeated the ideological structure and the political doctrines of the Second Bulgarian Empire through the imagery developed during the age of the Komnenoi.³⁵ However, Bulgaria never saw the characteristic Byzantine caesaropapism, at times verging on excess, where the emperors allowed themselves not only canonical, but even dogmatic interference in ecclesiastic life. Ever since the time of Prince Boris (852–889) under whom the country converted, the state had established a practice of patronage over the church and acted as its representative in all external contacts. Notable examples include the decision about the canonical jurisdiction of the Bulgarian Church during the ninth and the tenth centuries, the negotiations

³⁴ И. Дуйчев. *Рилският светец и неговата обител*. София 1947, 39.

³⁵ Бакалов, *op.cit.*, 178–9.

about a union with the Curia in Rome in 1204, and the re-establishment of the Bulgarian Patriarchate at the Council of Lampsacus-Gallipoli in 1235. In all these cases, the government was not merely an intermediary but a key actor and the main driving force of events. In the eyes of the clergy, the state's intervention was not an act of usurpation or encroachment; it was regarded as work for the common good, beneficial to the church itself. Unlike the Byzantine emperors, the Bulgarian tsars were not tempted to legislate in the affairs of the church. This alone explains the harmonious relationship between the two institutions and the impressive results of their collaboration.

Only a couple of exceptions stand out in the general context of this relationship and even they can be ascribed to political circumstance rather than disagreement in principle between the state and the church. The first was the attitude of prince Vladimir-Rasate (889–893), qualified as a restoration of paganism; the second was the execution of Patriarch Joachim III in 1300. The patriarch of Turnovo, Macarius, also died under vague circumstances that seem to be the result of royal violence. Tsar Boril's *Synodicon* calls the Macarius "over blessed" and "a holy martyr," suggesting some form of physical or moral assault.³⁶ The incumbent tsars were apparently acting from political considerations; their deeds indicate personal confrontation rather than a rupture with the church.

* * *

The tradition of mutually delegated powers between the two supreme institutions of state and church in the Roman and Byzantine societies was established in the fourth century and gradually took root in the governance and political practice of all medieval Christian societies. The medieval Bulgarian empire was no exception to the rule. The ideological justification of royal power was consistently supported by the arguments of the Christian faith that underpinned the doctrine of state sovereignty.

³⁶ Й. Андреев. „Държава и църква в средновековна България.“ *ТБТУ „Св.св. Кирил и Методий“*, ИФ, 10 (1973), 387–9.

THE BYZANTINES AS IMAGINED BY THE MEDIEVAL BULGARIANS

Petar Angelov

The subject of this study is part of the larger question of “the image of the other” in history. This question is particularly relevant to Balkan history because the centuries-long interaction among the peninsula’s various peoples has produced such durable images and stereotypes that global historical changes have often failed to destroy or radically transform them. In my book *Bulgaria and the Bulgarians in the Byzantine Imagination*, I tried to outline the Byzantine image of the Bulgarians and examine its relationship to historical reality.¹ Unsurprisingly, while working on that monograph, I began asking myself how the Bulgarians imagined their neighbors the Byzantines. To answer this question, we need to briefly review the term “Byzantines” or, more accurately, “Romans” (*Rōmaioi*), as they called themselves in the Middle Ages. It is well known that neither of these terms refers to an ethnic identity; instead, they are political terms denoting all subjects of the Byzantine Empire. In fact, the empire was a conglomerate of ethnicities, each with its specific qualities, traditions, outlook, and sensibilities. This is why discussing “the image of the Byzantine” entails both features typical of all subjects of the empire, regardless of their ethnic belonging, and ethnic and local particularities.

Undoubtedly, the medieval Bulgarians knew that the *Rōmaioi* were a mixture of ethnicities; yet, as I will demonstrate, they based their perceptions of the Byzantines mostly on their impressions about the Byzantine Greeks. This was not incidental: the Byzantine Greeks were the largest group in the empire and contributed most to the outlook for which the *Rōmaioi* were known in the medieval world. This is the major reason why the term “Romans” eventually came to denote the Greeks specifically. It also explains why medieval Bulgarian literature usually refers to the empire’s subjects as “Greeks” and only rarely as “Romans.” Therefore this study uses the terms *Rōmaioi* and “Greeks” interchangeably.

¹ П. Ангелов. *България и българите в представите на византийците*. София 1999.

Another important question is how medieval Bulgarians learned about the Greek customs and the Greek mind. Undoubtedly, this knowledge derived primarily from personal contacts and immediate impressions of various groups of Byzantines: captives, political refugees, diplomats, clerics, merchants, and others. Additionally, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, several Byzantine princesses were married to Bulgarian rulers; as a result, a substantial group of foreigners came to live in the capital Tŭrnovo. Their manners came to represent the "Roman" way of life and must have informed the values and tastes of the Bulgarian aristocracy.

The Bulgarians' and the Greeks' perceptions of each other were also strongly influenced by their shared identity as Orthodox Christians. One important example of how this shared identity worked is the continuous religious and literary exchange between Greek and Bulgarian clerics in the monasteries of Mount Athos over the centuries. We should also bear in mind the peculiar border zones that formed in the Balkans during the Middle Ages. Because their rulers frequently changed, these zones enabled the long-term cohabitation of multiple ethnicities: Bulgarians, Greeks, Serbs, Vlachs, and others. In turn, living together enabled these groups to become aware of their similarities and differences.

It is also significant that following 1018 the Bulgarian lands became part of Byzantium for more than a century and a half. Within that period, various factors contributed to the increased migration of Balkan peoples. As a result, many Bulgarians lived among Greeks in various parts of the empire. At the same time, Greek clerics and representatives of the central government settled in Bulgarian cities and villages.² A case in point is Theophilaktos, the archbishop of Ohrid, who lived among the Bulgarians in Macedonia for many years. His letters contain numerous reflections and judgments about the locals' outlook, and the latter, as it becomes clear, had had many opportunities to form first-hand impressions of the Greek character.³

²D. Angelov. "Zusammensetzung und Bewegung der Bevölkerung in der byzantinischen Welt." In: *Les Balkans au Moyen Age: La Bulgarie des Bogomils aux Turks*. London 1978, 11: 3–15; Г. Литаврин. *България и Византия (XI–XII в.)*. София 1987, 195 сл.; И. Божилов. *Българите във Византийската империя*. София 1995, 14 сл.

³See И. Божилов. „Писмата на Теофилакт Охридски като исторически извор“ *Известия на държавните архиви*, 14 (1967), 60–99; О. Иванова. „Стереотип болгар в сочинениях Феофилакта Ифеста“. In: *Славяне и их соседи. Етнопсихологическите стереотипы в средние века*. Москва 1990, 107–116; Ангелов, *България и българите*,

Likewise, we should take into account the fact that the medieval Bulgarians' image of the Greeks derived not only from immediate encounters and impressions but also drew on previously established perceptions, some of which dated back to antiquity. Controversial opinions about the Greeks' virtues emerged as early as the Roman antiquity. While the ancient Romans revered the Greeks for their exceptional accomplishments in literature, philosophy, the visual arts, and political thought, they found the Greeks lacking in virtue. An example of the respect and admiration of the ancient Romans for Hellas can be found in a letter from Pliny the Younger (first century AD) to Maximus, the newly appointed governor of the province of Achaia, which included central Greece and Peloponnesus.⁴ In addition to their idealized perception of the Greeks, however, the ancient Romans also articulated a much more critical idea of the Greek mores. Virgil's *Aeneid*, which narrates how the Romans originated from the ancient Trojans, contributed much to this critical attitude. Significantly, the Greeks' victory in the Trojan War was attributed not to their virtues as warriors but solely to their treacherousness and cunning. This perception was pithily expressed in the famous sentence "*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*" (I fear the Greeks even when they bring gifts), which Virgil's character Laocoön pronounced as he faced the Trojan horse.⁵

A letter by Gaius Sallustius Crispus to Julius Caesar is also relevant to this discussion. In the letter, Sallust commented on the qualities of some of Caesar's opponents in the Roman Senate and singled out Marcus Cato for his exceptional cunning, artfulness, and eloquence. These qualities, Sallust

⁴ Плиний Млади. *Избрани писма*. София 1979, 153. Pliny the Younger called on Maximus to bear in mind that he had been sent not just to any place but "to the province of Achaia, in that celebrated Greek region, where civilization, literature, and agriculture are believed to have first emerged... you have been sent among humans, who most deserve this name among other people, among the freest of free people, who have gained this right thanks to their exceptional virtues, accomplishments, and friendly connections. And ultimately, their treaties [with the conquering Romans] and their religious observance enabled them to hold onto this right, which nature had first granted them."

⁵ Virgil. *Aeneid*, II, 319. The French historian Marc Carrier has argued that the anti-Greek feeling in the *Aeneid* derived from Virgil's having Emperor Octavian Augustus as his patron. The poet wanted to exalt in his work the West's victory over the East, i.e., Octavian's victory over Anthony and Cleopatra who were perceived as two of the last remaining representatives of the ancient Greek and Hellenic political tradition. See M. Carrier. *L'Image de Grec selon les chroniqueurs des Croisades. Reception et reaction face au cérémonialé Byzantines 1096–1204*. Sherbrooke 2000, 3 ff..

explained, were the product of Catos's Greek schooling. Yet, Sallust also considered the Greeks "completely lacking in manliness, discernment, and diligence."⁶ Sallust then asked a rhetorical question: "Do you think that one can hold on to power by following the recipes of those [i.e. the Greeks] who lost their freedom in their own country because of their laziness?"⁷

Cicero, too, was decidedly critical of some aspects of the Greek character. His speech in defense of Lucius Valerius Flaccus makes the point. Flaccus was the governor of an Asian province, and in 62 BC the local population accused him of abuse of power. His trial drew not only Romans but also Greeks from the cities under his authority. In the speech, Cicero tried to persuade the jurors that the Greek witnesses' testimonies could not be trusted, because they belonged to a nation who had never been known for honesty and virtue. Cicero emphasized that "inborn tendency to flip and the perverse cultivation of vanity" were inherent to the Greek character. Of course, in his characteristic style, the Roman orator also acknowledged the Greeks' education and their advancement in many fields of knowledge. Likewise, he acknowledged their elegant language and sharp intellect; but he also warned his listeners that the Greeks were not famous for giving testimony in good faith or for being reliable witnesses. To support his argument, Cicero quoted the Greek expression "*da mihi testimonium mutuuum*" (testify in my favor, and I will testify in yours), which had become so popular among the Romans that "even those who did not know Greek, knew how to say it in Greek." In sum, Cicero believed that, to the Greeks, proving the truthfulness of their statements was less important than getting a convenient verdict. Moreover, for them, "the witness's oath is a joke (*jus iurandum iocus est*), testimony a game (*testimonium ludus*)," and the jurors' verdict nothing but "noise and smoke."⁸ The ancient Romans' critical view of the Greeks also produced the set phrase *Graeca fides* which came to denote any kind of oath-breaking and perfidy.⁹

Ancient Roman authors' controversial perception of the Greeks, which combined admiration for their learning and critique of their morals, proved

⁶ Салустий. *Исторически съчинения*. София 1982, 189–90.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 190.

⁸ Marcus Tullius Cicero. *Sämtliche Reden*, § 9, 10, 12.

⁹ On the meaning of this expression and its evolution in Roman history, see В. В. Латышев. *Очерки греческих древностей. Заклятия и клетвы*. Санкт-Петербург 1899, 2:9, 71.

long-lasting and it is not incidental that aspects of this perception persisted unmodified in the Middle Ages. In reading these authors, we encounter a paradox: the Greeks considered it an honor to call themselves *Rōmaioi*, that is, "Romans," not because they tried to emphasize an ethnic or spiritual closeness to the ancient Romans, but mostly because they tried to justify ideologically their claims to the legacy of the Roman Empire and their right to rule other peoples. Those who lived in proximity to the medieval Greeks gradually formed a perception of them, which combined in specific ways established myths about the characters of ancient Hellenes and Romans, as well as facts observed in the course of immediate encounters between the Greeks and other peoples.

In some cases, these perceptions, which circulated both orally and in writing, acquired special political significance. One such case is the centuries-long rivalry between the Roman Curia and the Patriarchate of Constantinople. In discussing the reasons for that rivalry, Western thinkers cited, among other things, the Greek character. It is well known that after the Great Schism of 1054, in the West the phrase "Greek church" became synonymous with straying away from the true Christian faith, as well as with hypocrisy, lack of discernment, and heresy. This is also a major reason why the crusaders who crossed the Balkan Peninsula in the eleventh and twelfth centuries were hostile to the locals; in the crusaders' view the locals professed "the schismatic Greek faith."

While the Western world was asserting this negative perception of the Greeks, the Greeks, by contrast, were trying to establish a completely different image of themselves among their neighbors. The Byzantine literary elites stressed the distinctive features that made the Greeks greater than other people and the Greek qualities that commanded admiration and emulation. It is unnecessary to list here all works that demonstrate the Greeks' high self-esteem and their sense of exceptionalism. It will suffice to discuss one of them, Cosmas Indicopleutes's *Christian Topography*. His numerous descriptions of distant, exotic lands also include a curious story about a Greek merchant who found himself on the island of Ceylon. There the merchant got into a debate with the local Persians about whose king was more powerful: the Roman or the Persian? To settle the argument, the ruler of the island compared the two kings' coins and declared, "The "Romans," or more accurately the

Greeks, are indeed handsome, strong, intelligent, and wise.”¹⁰

Another proof of the Greeks’ high self-esteem can be found in the words that the Byzantine historian Menander, in his narrative about an Avar mission in Constantinople, attributed to Emperor Justinian I. Rejecting the Avars’ insolent demands, the emperor said, “We, the Romans, have been destined by God since time immemorial to bring reckless people to their senses; we will not be treated like madmen.” And even in the fourteenth century, when Byzantium was but a pale vestige of its former glory, the Byzantine intellectuals stubbornly kept asserting that the Greeks were superior in virtue to all other peoples. As the well-known scholar and historian Nikephoros Gregoras confidently wrote, “unhappy all men who were born barbarians rather than Hellenes.”¹¹

The Bulgars’ and the Slavs’ first impressions of the Greeks were formed at the time of the great migrations of the steppe peoples. That so-called pre-state period, which spanned the sixth and the first half of the seventh centuries AD was marked by numerous conflicts and diplomatic exchanges between these two ethnic groups and Byzantium. This is also the time when the “barbarians” formed their first durable perceptions of the Greeks, who were seen predominantly as the enemy. An eloquent testimony to this image can be found in Menander’s narrative about the encounter between Emperor Tiberius envoys and the Turkic leader Turcsan, on whose territories the Bulgars lived. When the Greeks offered the Turks an alliance against the Persians, Turcsan replied, “Are you not of the Romans who use ten languages but one deceit? You mock all peoples by flattering them with varied words and then treacherously abandon them when they are in trouble, if you can benefit from it.”¹² Although we cannot know if these were the Turkic leader’s precise words, they indicate that the barbarians had a generalized negative image of the Romans as hypocrites and ingrates. The Greeks’ use of deception in war was certainly apparent to the Slavs. In one of Pseudo-Mauricius recommendations in the *Strategikon*, part of which discusses Slavic warfare, the Greek author unabashedly advises the *strategoï* on how to deal with “the

¹⁰ Козма Индикоплевс. „Християнска топография“. Ип: А. Милтенова, съст. и ред. *Стара българска литература, V. Естествознание*. София 1992, 136.

¹¹ Nikephorus Gregoras. *Byzantina historia*, I: 383.

¹² Menandri *Excerpta de legationibus*. Ип: *Гръцки извори за българската история* [= *Fontes Graeci Historiae Bulgaricae*, hereafter ГИБИ]. София 1958, II: 228–9.

barbarians” during war, stating, “It is good to use deceit, attacks, and famine against the enemy. Besides, do not declare war until you can rely on taking the adversary by surprise rather than on impressing him with courage and display of power.”¹³ This, and other suggestions in Pseudo-Mauricius treatise demonstrate the author’s belief that the end justified the means and that he did not consider cunning and treachery ignoble.

Procopius of Caesaria also informs us that Justinian I adopted a duplicitous policy towards the Kutrigur and Utigur tribes, trying to create tension and hostility between them. For many years the emperor would give annual gifts only to the Kutrigurs, but eventually he declared them ungrateful. Not only did they keep attacking Roman territories, he said, but they also did not share their gifts with their relatives and neighbors, the Utigurs. Naturally, this outraged the Utigurs and, tempted by gifts from the emperor, they attacked the supposedly richer Kutrigurs. The resulting war between them lasted for a long time, leading to their mutual exhaustion.¹⁴

The extant sources demonstrate that other “barbarian” peoples, too, enjoyed the *Rōmaioi*’s generosity while fearing their hypocrisy. For instance, the Avar khan Baian feared that the annual gifts he received from Byzantium did not guarantee his power and security.¹⁵ Likewise, the Avar envoy Koh harshly reproached the Byzantine commander Priscus who was organizing a campaign north of the Danube. According to Menander, Koh said, “You taught the barbarians disobedience. We would not know what breaking a treaty was, if you, who know not how to stay peaceful, had not taught us how to lie.”¹⁶ Even if these were not Koh’s exact words, his statement suggests that the barbarians’ long-standing contacts with the empire had taught them the truth behind the expression: “*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*” We can thus expect that even after 681 the Bulgarians’ image of the Byzantines remained marred by suspicion and doubts about their sincerity. We can infer as much from the stone inscription from the village of Hambarli, which documents the

¹³ Mauricius. *Arta militara*, 204.

¹⁴ Procopii Caesariensis *Libri de bellis VIII*. In: ГИБИ. София 1958, II: 142

¹⁵ Menander, *op.cit.*, 254. According to Menander, the ruler of the Avars “feared for his life, because he knew that the Romans tempted with presents many tribes who attacked their lands, but in the end, when an opportunity presented itself, they attacked those tribes and destroyed them to the last man.”

¹⁶ Theophylact Simocatta. *Historiae*. In: ГИБИ. София 1958, II: 322.

conquests of Khan Krum (803-814) in Thrace. The text presents the *Rōmaioi* in a strongly negative light, especially their ruler, Nikephoros I Genikos; he is unflatteringly described as “the decrepit emperor” and “the bald one.” This caricature is further aggravated by the suggestion of his cruelty. “He burned our lands,” the inscription notes; even worse, “he forgot his oaths.” In other words, we have proof that more than a century after the Bulgarian state was founded, its rulers continued to view the Romans as the treacherous neighbor who did not keep his word. In 813, Khan Krum had a memorable experience of their treachery. He was enticed to the walls of Constantinople under the pretext of peaceful negotiations and only by sheer chance escaped the deadly trap set up by Leo V.¹⁷

It appears that after this incident, the Bulgarians’ growing mistrust of the Romans led to the practice of exchanging ritual oaths upon signing treaties, as in 815 when Khan Omurtag and Emperor Leo V signed a thirty-year peace treaty. The exchange of ritual oaths on this occasion must have been a serious compromise on the part of the Romans, who were trying to dispel their reputation of failing to keep their promises to the “barbarians.”¹⁸

Generally, the khans in the Bulgarian capital Pliska were skeptical of the idealized image that the *Rōmaioi* presented of themselves and tried to impose on medieval Europe. The essential elements of this image included the *Rōmaioi*’s place of God’s chosen people, their invincibility, learnedness, and intellectual superiority over everyone else. Bulgarian rulers objected to this sense of exceptionalism and made concerted efforts to attain a symbolic status equal to that of the “incomparable” Byzantine emperors. Khan Tervel made an important first step in this direction when the Byzantines declared him Caesar and he took on wearing Byzantine purple-colored clothes. Omurtag took an extra step by formulating his title in a manner which closely

¹⁷ В. Златарски. *История на българската държава през средните векове*. София 1970–1972, I (1): 352.

¹⁸ This event is described in *Vita Nicephori auctore Ignatio Diacono*. In: ГИБИ. София 1961, IV: 36-7.; Theophanes Continuatus *Chronographia*. In: ГИБИ. София 1964, V: 113-4. For the oath’s significance, see В. Златарски. „Клятва у езических болгар“. In: *Избрани произведения*. София 1970–1972, I: 181–9; Ю. Трифонов. „Към въпроса за византийско-българските договори с езически обреди“. *Известия на Българския археологически институт*, 11 (1937–1938), 263–79; В. Бешевлиев. *Първобългарите. Бит и култура*. София 1981, 80–3.

emulated that of the emperor.¹⁹ At the same time, the Bulgarians looked for opportunities to undermine the Greeks' sense of religious superiority. The pagans in Pliska were not at all convinced that Christianity made the Byzantines morally superior. This is illustrated by Khan Presian's inscription at Philippi in Greece. Unlike other inscriptions from the pagan period, which identify the empire's subjects as Greeks, this inscription emphasizes their faith and identifies them as Christians. The same inscription reads: "The Bulgarians showed much kindness to the Christians, which the Christians forgot, but God sees everything."²⁰ These words demonstrate that the pagan Bulgarians' perception of the Romans also involved religious rivalry. Clearly, while the *Rōmaioi* considered paganism vile and unclean, the Bulgarians were equally convinced that Christianity had done nothing to cure the *Rōmaioi* of their deceitfulness and ingratitude. Moreover, the Bulgarians found the *Rōmaioi*'s pride in being Christian boastful and unjustified.²¹

These examples should not create the impression that the Bulgarian khans' policy towards Byzantium invariably entailed the traditional mistrust that the "barbarians" harbored towards the Greeks. Often, specific political conditions or coincidental interests required mutual trust. For instance, Emperor Heraclius and Bulgaria's founder Koubrat enjoyed a long-lasting friendship, which led to the treaty of 635 and the conferral of the title *patrikios* upon Koubrat.²² Neither did the relationship between Khan Tervel and the Greeks fit the established stereotypes. This relationship resulted in important political treaties and the Bulgarians' crucial military support for the

¹⁹ Г. Бакалов. *Средновековният български владетел. Титулатура и инсигнии*. София 1985, 89 сл. On this outward emulation, see also Ангелов, *България и българите*, 53 сл.

²⁰ В. Бешевлиев. *Първобългарски надписи*. София 1979, 134.

²¹ This is evidenced by the dialogue between Khan Omurtag and the Byzantine slave Kinam in the *Martyrion of the Tiberiopolis Martyrs*. Enraged by Kinam's refusal to worship the pagan deities whom Kinam considered demons, Khan Krum said, "Do not insult our gods, because we who worship them defeated the entire Roman state. If Christ were a true god, as you say, he would have assisted you and prevented you from becoming slaves, given that you serve him and worship him." Teophilacti Achridentis *Archiepiscopi Bulgariae Scripta ad Historiam Bulgariae Pertinentia*. In: ГИБИ. София 1994, IX: 64.

²² Златарски, *История*, I (1): 142.

Greeks against the Arabs, which saved Constantinople in 717/718.²³ Undoubtedly, Bulgaria's political and commercial relationships with Byzantium added some positive features to the traditionally negative image of the Greeks. The Bulgarians realized that the Greeks were not only "cunning" adversaries; they also had rich traditions from which the Bulgarians could learn, ranging from construction skills, military arts, and diplomacy, to fashion, royal titles, and court ceremonies. This must have been one reason why the khans of pagan Bulgaria tried to appoint experienced and educated Greeks to various court positions. For instance, among Krum's assistants titled *kavhan* (*cavkhan*) and *ičerguboil*, who were appointed to rule the newly-conquered Thracian territories, the Hambarli inscription also mentions the names of Byzantine strategists such as Leo, Vardas, Ioannis, Gregoras, and others.²⁴ We also know that Constantine Pacik, the husband of Khan Krum's sister, was of Greek origin.²⁵ It is likely, too, that educated Greeks from the khan's administration prepared the texts for the Greek-language stone inscriptions.²⁶ Likewise, an old legend tells about a talented Byzantine artist in Pliska whom Khan Boris hired to paint a hunting scene for the palace shortly before the Bulgarians converted to Christianity.²⁷ The conversion, which ended the religious rivalry between the two peoples, was another crucial factor enabling the Bulgarians and Greeks to form more realistic ideas of each other.

After the conversion of the Bulgarians to Christianity in 865, the empire acknowledged the Bulgarians' right to have their own state and pronounced them its "spiritual sons," undermining the Bulgarian rulers' entrenched view

²³ В. Гюзелев, „Участието на българите в отблъскването на арабската обсада на Цариград през 717–718 г. според средновековните писмени извори и интерпретацията му в съвременната историография“. In: В. Гюзелев. *Средновековна България в светлината на нови извори*. София 1981, 122–55.

²⁴ Бешевлиев, *Първобългарски надписи*, 174.

²⁵ According to Златарски, *История*, I (1): 352, Constantine Pacik was the heir of Romans who had escaped to Bulgaria. He accompanied the khan to his talks with Emperor Leo V the Armenian, which took place in 813 before the walls of Constantinople. It is possible that Pacik served as translator.

²⁶ Бешевлиев, *op. cit.*, 79. The author notes that the mastery of the Greek language demonstrated in the inscriptions suggests that Greeks may have contributed to composing them. He thinks it is possible that some of these Greeks were even clerics - monks from the remaining Greek monasteries in Bulgaria.

²⁷ Theophanes Continuatus, *op. cit.*, 116.

of Byzantium as their archenemy.²⁸ This increase in mutual trust must have been reinforced by the Byzantine elite's stance that the differences between Bulgarians and Romans would gradually disappear now that they were two parts of the same "people of God." This position is evidenced both in Patriarch Nicholas I Mystikos's correspondence with Tsar Symeon and in the "Sermon on the Treaty of 927 with the Bulgarians."²⁹ The Bulgarians' awareness of Byzantium's rich and varied culture added a positive nuance to their perception of the Greeks. As the Bulgarians kept learning from Byzantium's accomplishments and then applying them creatively, this perception became more complex and controversial. The stereotypes about the Greeks' characteristic cunning and hypocrisy, which had been established for centuries, now vied with the Bulgarians' respect for the Greek's cultural and spiritual accomplishments. Following their conversion, many Bulgarians, especially aristocrats, tried to learn and apply features of the Byzantine outlook and way of life. Not incidentally, Emperor Leo VI, in his work *Tactica*, noted that since the Bulgarians adopted the Christian faith, "their mores became more similar to the *Rōmaioi*", and at the same time, the Bulgarians began to abandon their savage and nomadic ways."³⁰

Despite these changes, however, the Bulgarians, at least at first, had ample reasons to retain their traditional doubts about the Greeks' good will and sincerity. This is evidenced by Prince Boris's questions to Pope Nicholas I, some of which expressed explicit doubts about whether the Constantinopolitan Church had truthfully conveyed Christ's teaching to the Bulgarians. The Roman Pope seized upon Boris' doubt, and in some of his answers, he tried to confirm the prince's fears that the Greeks had been feeding him bad advice. This can be gleaned from some of the subject headings, for instance, in answer fifty-six: "Regarding your statement that the Greeks do not allow you to take communion without your having fasted first." Likewise, answer sixty-seven reads: "You say that the Greeks forbid eunuchs to slaughter your animals and that they tell you it is a grave sin to eat an animal that had been

²⁸ Ангелов, *България и българите*, 83 сл.

²⁹ П. Ангелов. „Ролята на християнството в развитието на средновековната българска дипломатия“. *Годишник на Софийския университет. Научен център за славяно-византийски проучвания „Иван Дуйчев“*, (1987), 73 сл.; *idem*, *България и българите*, 91 сл.

³⁰ Leonis Philosophi *Tactica*. In: *ГИБИ*. София 1961, IV: 168.

slaughtered by a eunuch.”³¹ Boris’ suspicion towards the Greeks is evidenced by questions fifty-four and ninety-four.³² At the end of his response, the Pope found it necessary to repeat his insistence that the newly converted Bulgarians should not trust “just any Christians, that is, Greeks or Armenians, who can tell them all kinds of things.”³³ All of this suggests that Boris’s rapprochement with the Roman church after 866 was motivated, among other things, by the Bulgarians’ traditional doubts about the Greeks’ integrity. Pope John VIII, too, was aware of this prejudice, and following the defeat of the papal diplomacy at the Council at Constantinople in 870, he wrote several letters to Boris trying to persuade him that the Greeks’ attitude towards the newly converted Bulgarians was not a friendly one. Notably, the Pope did not directly blame Boris for what happened at the council; instead he reprimanded the authorities at Constantinople for having used their cunning against the Bulgarians yet again, causing them to stray from the proper way of being Christian. In his very first letter, John VIII warned that if Boris did not curb “the Greek’s perfidy,” Rome would be forced to excommunicate “the reckless and riotous Patriarch Ignatius.”³⁴ In another letter, dated April 878, the Pope said that he “grieved” over the Bulgarian ruler’s having been deceived by “the cunning of the depraved.” He also warned Boris that he could fall into “the abyss of sin,” given that the Greeks “habitually fall into various heresies and schisms,”³⁵ and suggested that Boris avoid “their scheming and their friendship.” Further on, after he assured Boris that he was not interested in taking over Bulgaria’s government, but only wanted to make sure that the Bulgarian diocese was well governed, the Pope warned Boris once again that the emperor of Byzantium and the patriarch of Constantinople had often “begotten heresies.” Finally, the Pope included an already routine warning, intended to remind the Bulgarian prince of the Greeks’ treacherousness. “And so,” the Pope concluded, “do not follow the Greeks because they always offer false proofs and engage in cunning tricks.”³⁶ A letter from May 879 made similar insinuations; Boris was

³¹ *Responsa Nicolai I Papae ad consulta Bulgarorum. Латински извори за българската история [= Fontes Latini Historiae Bulgaricae, hereafter ЛИБИ].* София 1960, II: 102, 107.

³² *Ibid.*, 100, 119.

³³ *Ibid.*, 124.

³⁴ *Iohannes VIII Papa Epistolae.* In: *ЛИБИ.* София 1960, II: 137.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 147–8.

³⁶ (See next page)

reprimanded for having trusted the Greeks “who get more confused every day by engaging with new and different teachings.”³⁷ In the end, the Pope’s tactic did not work. Prince Boris acted once again as a pragmatic politician whose decisions were motivated by the interest of his state and not by his emotional response to the image of the “cunning neighbor.”

In time, the Bulgarians’ doubts about the purity and authenticity of the faith they received from Byzantium faded. The translation of a significant number of theological essays by widely acknowledged Greek clerics during the so-called Tsar Symeon’s Golden Age testify to that. Among them were essays by Basil the Great, John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus, John of Damascus, Athanasios of Alexandria, and others. Undoubtedly, such authoritative works helped establish a positive image of the Greeks among the Bulgarian intellectual elite by introducing it to Byzantium’s rich philosophical, historiographic, literary, and theological traditions. At the same time, cultural rivalry emerged as the Bulgarians tried to demonstrate that their knowledge and capabilities were equal to those of the Byzantines. The rivalry is particularly well illustrated by the essay, *Treatise on the Letters*, written in the ninth century by Hrabr the Monk.³⁸ The essay argues that all peoples’ abilities and talents have been predetermined by God

36 Ibid., 149–50. Anastasius the Librarian, too, accused the Greeks of using false evidence. In a letter to Pope Adrian II, Athanasius declared his intentions to describe in great detail everything that had happened at the Council at Constantinople in 870, because he feared that “the clerics of Constantinople, true to their piggish ways, may add or change something in the Greek protocols.” Further in the same letter, Anastasius commented several times on the Greeks’ habit of forging documents, saying that they had displayed “cunning” and even “perfidy” at various universal councils by “meddling even with the general decrees and insolently changing anything as it pleases them, now cutting, now expanding and modifying, sometimes behind their allies’ backs, sometimes in secret, sometimes during a council, and sometimes after a council.” Anastasius Bibliothecarius *Epistolae*. In: ЛИБИ. София 1960, II: 196, 203.

³⁷ Iohannes VIII Papa, *op. cit.*, 160.

³⁸ For English translations with bibliography, see T. Butler. *Monumenta Bulgarica. A Bilingual Anthology of Bulgarian Texts from 9th to the 19th Centuries*. Ann Arbor, MI, 1996, 143-154 and K. Petkov. *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria, Seventh-Fifteenth Century: The Records of a Bygone Culture*. Leiden, Boston, 2008, 65-68, no. 81.

and distributed after “the confusion of tongues.”³⁹ Interestingly, the author suggested that the Greeks, being the heirs of Hellenic knowledge, were inherently arrogant and tended to underestimate the cultural accomplishments and capabilities of their neighbors. He was particularly critical of those who treated the Slavic alphabet with contempt and who argued that, unlike the Hebrew, Greek, or Latin letters, the Slavic letters had not been “approved by God.” He also asserted that many Greeks were ignorant of the history of their letters; they knew neither their precise number, nor who invented them and from which older alphabets they were borrowed. Finally, he reprimanded the Greeks’ arrogant attitude towards the Slavic alphabet and argued that this alphabet was more sacred and honest because it was created by “a holy man”; by contrast, the Greek letters were invented by “pagan Hellenes.”⁴⁰

Interestingly, at the time of the Golden Age, when the Bulgarian men of letters became acquainted with the rich tradition of “Hellenic wisdom” and started appreciating the Greeks’ incontestable role in preserving and enriching it further, negative perceptions of the Greeks continued to dominate Greek-Bulgarian political relations. This is particularly well illustrated by the lengthy dispute between Bulgaria and Byzantium during the reign of Tsar Symeon. An analysis of Patriarch Nicholas I Mystikos extensive correspondence demonstrates that the *Rōmaioi*’s habitual cunning and failure to keep their promises were a major reason why the Bulgarian ruler decided to wage a war. The events following Empress Zoe’s becoming a regent for her underage son Constantine VII Porphyrogenetus in 914 made this failure particularly blatant. As it is well known, she refused to fulfill an earlier agreement to have her son engaged to Tsar Symeon’s daughter. Even though Nicholas had been removed

³⁹ Черноризец Храбър. „За буквите”. In: Л. Грашева, съст и ред. *Стара българска литература*, II. *Ораторска проза*. София 1982, 28. The essay remarks that the Hellenes were given the gifts of “grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy.” For English translations, see Buttler, *Monumenta Bulgarica*, 149 and Petkov, *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria*, 66-67.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* In: Buttler, *Monumenta Bulgarica*, 151 and Petkov, *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria*, 67. The false perception of “the all-knowing Greeks” was definitively refuted by the end of the essay: “And if you ask the Greek men of letters, ‘Who created your letters and translated your scriptures, and when [was this done]?’ there is scarcely anyone among them who knows. But if you ask the Slavic schoolchildren, saying: ‘Who created your alphabet and translated your books?’ they all know, and will answer thus : ‘Saint Constantine the Philosopher, named Cyril; he invented our alphabet and translated our books, he and his brother Methodius.’”

from the regency, he wrote several letters to Symeon, trying to dissuade him from starting a war. In one of these letters, he even openly acknowledged that Symeon's accusations that the *Rōmaioi* broke their oaths were completely justified. Further on, Nicholas pleaded with Symeon not to extend his hatred of those who had done him wrong to all the subjects of the empire. Among other things, these letters shed light upon how Bulgarians sometimes formed impressions of the *Rōmaioi*'s *pars pro toto*, i.e., a judgment about a particular person's behavior prompted generalizations about the virtues or deficiencies of an entire people. The patriarch was trying to prevent such stereotyping.⁴¹

Another letter implies more subtly that the *Rōmaioi* were not to be blamed for the evil doings of the actual culprits for the war with Symeon.⁴² In Emperor Roman I Lacapenus letters to the Bulgarian tsar, we come across the same reasoning that a person's actions towards another should not be motivated solely by prejudice and a desire for vengeance. The emperor reminded Symeon that when they met at the walls of Constantinople in 923, the tsar mocked the *Rōmaioi* and accused them of treachery. The emperor rejected the accusation and suggested that "cunning," a trait traditionally ascribed to the *Rōmaioi*, was not a vice. To support this argument, Roman quoted the biblical king Solomon, whose words, in Roman's interpretation, presented cunning as a rational act and even "a kind of wisdom."⁴³ Finally, Roman appealed to Symeon not to be a slave to prejudice and to erase "the old, distorted images so that the sacred name of pure peace can take their place."⁴⁴ These images never faded completely, however, even after Symeon's death in 927, which marked the beginning of a new phase of Bulgarian-Byzantine relations. The peace treaty which Byzantium signed with Symeon's successor, Peter, entailed Peter's marriage to Roman's granddaughter Maria. Maria was the first Greek princess who became Bulgarian queen. This precedent in the relations between the two peoples undoubtedly helped them become better acquainted with each other. After 927, when Maria brought her court to Preslav, Bulgarians witnessed many aspects of the Byzantine way of life

⁴¹ Nicolaus Patriarhae *Epistolae*. In: ГИБИ. София 1961, IV: 233. The Patriarch wrote: "I cannot tell how our people was so misled; unfortunately, cunning people are powerful... For we who honor the truth must reprimand our rulers."

⁴² *Ibid.*, 247.

⁴³ Romani Lacapeni *Epistolae*. In: ГИБИ. София 1961, IV: 301.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 304.

about which they had been ignorant. Yet, while some Bulgarians overcame their prejudices and even adopted features of the Byzantine *modus vivendi*, others continued to treat all things Byzantine with suspicion. Among the latter group were the tsar's brothers who, according to the chronicler Theophanes, "kept wearing Bulgarian attire."⁴⁵ According to Vasil Zlatarski, the brothers' preference can be interpreted as a kind of protest against the spread of the Byzantine lifestyle at the court of Preslav.⁴⁶ In other words, they could not shed their conviction that nothing good could come from emulating the Byzantine ways or unreservedly accepting their friendship.

Following the treaty of "complete peace" of 927, a number of events reinforced this kind of thinking. It became clear that Byzantine policy toward Bulgaria was still as duplicitous as before, even if the duplicity was no longer as obvious. This became obvious from the Greeks' indulgent treatment of Tsar Peter's brother, Ivan, who in 928 had plotted against him. One of the emperor's trusted men aided Ivan's flight from Bulgaria and took him to Constantinople. Once there, Ivan was quickly released of his monastic vows, married to the daughter of a noble Armenian family, and settled in a Byzantine province.⁴⁷ The *Rōmaioi* proved ungrateful once again in 943, when Peter gave them timely notice that the Russian Prince Igor was planning a campaign against Constantinople. The emperor managed to reach an agreement with the Russians, but he showed no concern for how that agreement could affect Bulgaria. Since Igor's allies, the Pechenegs, did not receive the spoils they had been promised when they joined in Russia's campaign, they were encouraged to attack and plunder Northern Bulgaria by way of compensation. This happened with Byzantium's tacit support.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Theophanes Continuatus, *op. cit.*, 195.

⁴⁶ Златарски, *История*, I (2): 495, н. 3. It is possible that the Bulgarians' introduction to Roman everyday practices is the reason why the Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle referred to Symeon's son and successor, Peter, as "Tsar of the Bulgarians and the Greeks." See „Апокрифна българска летопис”. In: Д. Петканова, съст. и ред. *Стара българска литература*, I. *Апокрифи*. София 1982, 297.

⁴⁷ Златарски, *История*, I (2): 513–4.

⁴⁸ The Pechenegs' raid on Northern Bulgaria may be the one referred to in Župan Dimitar's inscription, which was found in Northern Dobrudža, at the village of Mircea Voda. See K. Popkonstantinov, O. Kronsteiner. "Altbulgarischen inschriften," 1. *Die Slawischen Sprachen*, 36 (1994), 109. See also В. Гюзелев. „Добруджанският надпис и събитията в България през 943 г.“ *Исторически преглед*, 6 (1968), 40 сл. On Igor's agreement

Yet the above events did not immediately put an end to the Bulgarians' loyalty to Byzantium. In fact, the Bulgarians still considered the *Rōmaioi* their religious mentors. For instance, Patriarch Theophylaktos's *Epistle to Tsar Peter* offers much benevolent advice to the Bulgarian ruler in his struggle with the Bogomil heresy. But while the Bulgarians and the Greeks were able to find common ground in the matter of religion, they failed to do so in the matter of politics. The end of Peter's reign was marked by events that set the Bulgarians and the Greeks on a collision course. I will briefly outline these events as they demonstrate how a long-held prejudice against the Greeks as oath breakers urged the Bulgarian tsar to take specific action.

John Zonaras chronicle informs us that, the Bulgarian tsar signed an agreement with the Magyars in 965 allowing them unlimited access through the Bulgarian lands, which facilitated their raids on Byzantium. Having not been notified of this agreement, the emperor was enraged, and the following year, he undertook a campaign against Bulgaria. When his troops reached the border trenches at Erkesia, he sent a letter to Peter insisting that he dissolve the Bulgarian-Magyar agreement.⁴⁹ Peter immediately responded by accusing the government in Constantinople of not fulfilling their agreements with their allies. Peter unequivocally stated that he was not going to act in the "usual manner of the *Rōmaioi*;" in other word, he would not break his oath and start a war against his allies without having given them warning.⁵⁰

Tsar Samuel's protracted and dramatic war against Emperor Basil II played an especially important part in the evolving perception of the Greeks in medieval Bulgaria. At the turn of the eleventh century, it became clear that

with the Byzantines, see А. Н. Сахаров. *Дипломацията на древна Русия IX – първата половина на X в.* София 1984, 191; Б. Д. Николаев. „К истории болгаро-русских отношений в начале 40-х годов X века”. *Советское славяноведение*, 6 (1982), 49–55. For more details about the Pechenegs' part in those events, see И. Божилов. „България и печенегите (896-1018 г.)”. *Исторически преглед*, 29/2 (1973), 37–62.

⁴⁹ Ioannis Zonarae *Epitomae Historiarum*. In: *ГИБИ*. София 1968, VII: 179. On these events, see Златарски, *История*, I (2): 547 сл.

⁵⁰ Ioannis Zonarae, *op. cit.*, 179. According to the chronicler, Peter's letter to the emperor contained the following words: "When they [the Magyars] waged war against us, and we asked you to help us, you refused to do it. And now that we were forced to sign a treaty with them, you consider it fair to ask us to break the treaty, raise arms against them and engage in a war despite all agreements." Even if these are not Peter's precise words, his message is quite clear.

the *Rōmaioi*, who had converted the Bulgarians to Christianity, establishing themselves as the Bulgarians' religious counselors and teachers, wanted to subjugate them and erase all memory of the Bulgarian state. The bitter conflict that ensued confirmed the stereotypical image of "the cunning and cruel *Rōmaioi*" in the Bulgarian consciousness. The inhuman cruelty of Basil II, who blinded 14,000 captives from Samuel's army in 1014, had especially strong repercussions. Basil's act was remembered as an emblematic event that shaped the Bulgarians' view of Byzantium as a merciless enemy rather than a paragon of Christian mercy for centuries to come. Two hundred years later, in 1205, the tragic fate of Samuel's soldiers fueled Tsar Kaloyan's decision to punish severely the Greek aristocracy of the city of Plovdiv, killing almost all of them. George Akropolites, who recorded the event, noted that after having done that, the Bulgarian tsar made a point of adopting the nickname *Rōmaioktonos* ("Roman"-slayer) to celebrate his revenge for "the suffering that Emperor Basil II had brought upon the Bulgarians."⁵¹ It is difficult to find a more telling example of how the memory of an event and the perceptions related to it can survive for several generations and motivate specific acts.

In this context, it is no small detail that Boril's *Synodikon* describes Byzantium's rule over the Bulgarian lands as "the Greek slavery."⁵² The long Byzantine rule of the Bulgarian lands may be the reason why the *Bulgarian Apocryphal Annals*, which was probably written in the eleventh century, began by reminding its readers that the Bulgarians and the Greeks had always been enemies.⁵³ Centuries later, in his *Life of St. John of Rila*, Patriarch Euthymius tellingly characterized Byzantine rule as "the Greek violence."⁵⁴

⁵¹ Georgii Acropolitae *Historia*. In: ГИБН. София 1972, VIII: 156.

⁵² The *Synodikon* reads: "To Tsar John Asen Belgun, who set free the Bulgarian people from the Greek slavery, eternal memory." И. Дуйчев. *Стара българска книжнина*. София 1944, 168. English translations, see Buttler. *Monumenta Bulgarica* 211 and Petkov, *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria*, 254.

⁵³ „Апокрифна българска летопис“, In: Д. Петканова, съст. и ред. *Стара българска литература*. I. *Апокрифи*. София, 1982, 296. "And after the slaying of Ispor [i.e., Asparuch], tsar of the Bulgarians, the Coumans were called Bulgarians. Earlier, they had been godless pagans under Ispor and [lived] in great iniquity and were always enemies of the Greek kingdom, for many years." For an English translations see: Petkov, *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria*, 195.

⁵⁴ Патриарх Евтимий. „Пространно житие на Иван Рилски“. In: К. Иванова, съст и ред. *Стара българска литература*, IV. *Житиенписни творби*. София 1986, 147. "Soon afterwards, when God granted that the Bulgarian state be revived and when he raised - as

The New Master's Image

During the Byzantine rule, which lasted almost two centuries, the Bulgarians lost their political and religious independence. The Greek liturgy, which many Bulgarians did not understand, sounded from the pulpits; in the cities, the Byzantine tax and military administration abused the locals. Naturally, all this fed into the Bulgarians' long-standing prejudice against the *Rōmaioi*. The correspondence of Archbishop Theophylaktos of Ohrid sheds light on this development. Even though he was prone to describing his experiences metaphorically and exaggerated the difficulties he encountered while serving among the Bulgarians in a number of letters, the archbishop wrote explicitly that his parishioners disliked him for being Greek, not for being their priest. Theophylaktos suggested that one reason why the Bulgarians were wary of his fellow countrymen was the Bulgarians' poor understanding of Greek. This prevented the two peoples from growing closer to each other and encouraged negative stereotypes. In his *Life of St. Clement of Ohrid*, Theophylaktos noted that after the Bulgarians' conversion, many Bulgarian priests "had trouble understanding Greek texts, even though they knew the Greek letters."⁵⁵ And in a letter, he came up with an especially vivid metaphor to explain the language barrier that separated him from the Bulgarians in Ohrid. Their ability to understand him, he complained, was comparable to a donkey's ability to appreciate the sound of a lyre.⁵⁶

The linguistic rivalry between the Bulgarians and the Greeks during the Byzantine rule – and the mutual dislike and "misunderstanding" that went with it – is also described in the so-called *Legend of Thessaloniki*, an apocryphal story about how Constantine the Philosopher created the Slavic letters.⁵⁷ The

it has been written—the fallen tabernacle, that the Greek violence had brought down, he raised the horn of the Bulgarian Kingdom, at the time of the pious Asen, who was named John in holy baptism." For partial translations of Patriarch Euthymius' *Life of St. John of Rila*, see Buttler. *Monumenta Bulgarica* 247–259 and Petkov, *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria*, 344–350, no. 146.

⁵⁵ Theophilacti Achridensis, *op. cit.*, 45. Gilbert Dagron makes interesting observations about Byzantium's linguistic pluralism in Ж. Дагрон. „Формы и функции языкового плюрализма в Византии (IX–XII в)“. In: П. М. Шукуров. *Чужое: опыт преодоления*. Москва 1999, 160–94.

⁵⁶ Theophilacti Achridensis, *op. cit.*, 132. Theophylaktos's precise words were the following: "The people of Ohrid listen to my song as donkeys listen to a lyre."

⁵⁷ „Слово от Кирил Философ как покръсти българите“. In: *Стара българска лите-*

story is especially intriguing for its open divergence from all known historical facts about that event. The anonymous author insisted that the Greeks in no way supported Cyril's cause, but instead tried to impede his work as much as they could. Thus, at one point, John, the bishop of Thessaloniki, warns Cyril against going to the Bulgarian lands, because the Bulgarians "are cannibals and will eat you."⁵⁸ Further in the story, the character of Cyril himself says that he met some Bulgarians at the city market, and when he heard their language, he was so frightened that he felt as though he were descending "in infernal darkness." Tellingly, he regained his courage only after a miracle, whereby a dove sent him a bundle of thirty-two fig-tree branches symbolizing the Slavic letters. At that instance, he forgot "the Greek language" and could no longer understand his tablemates' conversation. Significantly, the *Legend of Thessaloniki* describes the Greeks not only as liars who make absurd statements about the Bulgarians, but also as people who do not act in harmony with God's will – the same will that urged Cyril to write the Slavic letters. Cyril says the Greeks did not want him to leave Thessaloniki, and so they "hid him away."⁵⁹ As a result, "the Bulgarian princes Desimir of Moravia and Radivoi of Preslav and all the Bulgarian princes fought the Greeks for three years at the walls of Thessaloniki, and much blood was shed."⁶⁰ Finally, the residents of Thessaloniki were forced to let Cyril go, and he went to live among the Bulgarians in the town of Raven on the river Bregalnitsa, where he invented thirty-two letters for them. The story ends on an emphatically patriotic note: the Bulgarians had been divinely ordained "to render to God the Orthodox faith and Christianity."⁶¹ It is unclear when *The Legend* was composed, but its highly negative description of the Greeks suggests it was written at the time of the Byzantine rule.⁶² It is likely that the version of Hrabr

ратура, I. For an English translation, see Petkov, *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria*, 141-143, no. 105.

⁵⁸ „Слово от Кирил Философ как покръсти българите“, 300. The inclusion of Bishop John in the story is clearly anachronistic. This bishop lived in the seventh century.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid. Yordan Ivanov suggests that this may be a reference to the Slavic sieges of Thessaloniki in the sixth and seventh centuries. See Й. Иванов. *Северна Македония*. София 1906, 66–8.

⁶¹ „Слово от Кирил Философ“.

⁶² The emergence of the *Legend of Thessaloniki* is discussed in В. Тъпкова-Займова, А. Милтенова. *Историко-апокалиптичната книжнина във Византия и в средновековна България*. София 1996, 331 сл. According to the authors, the second half of the

the Monk's *Treatise on the Letters*, which appears in the so-called "Berlin Compendium" of the thirteenth century, was written during the Byzantine rule as well. Compared to the original, the revised version offers harsher polemic against the Greeks. For example, while the original states that converted to Christianity, after the Slavs "they were made to write with Roman and Greek letters," the revised version says that "after the Greeks and the Slavs were baptized, the Slavs were made to write in the Slavic language with unmodified Greek letters." According to the anonymous author, the Greeks and the Slavs became Christians at the same time. Thus, in terms of religion, the Greeks were not superior to the Slavs. The Greeks' claim to leadership in all kinds of spheres is directly challenged in the second part of the revised version: "Listen to what those mad Greeks are saying: 'The Slavic letters originated from our letters.' Tell the Greeks, 'Where do the Greek books talk about God in the manner that the Slavic books first talked about him?'" In the end, the author, fully convinced that the Greeks were not superior to the Bulgarians in anything, gives the following advice: "Therefore, my brothers, this is what you should do. If two priests, a Bulgarian and a Greek, are present, the Slavic liturgy should be read, not the Greek. If, however, both priests must read, do not allow that the Slavic liturgy be dropped and the Greek sung, because the Slavic liturgy is holy. A holy man created it to glorify our God through the ages. Amen."

The Bulgarian written sources from the time of the Byzantine rule that I have quoted here demonstrate that all talk about the Greeks being tolerant toward the Bulgarians is exaggerated. Hostility dominated the Bulgarians' perception of the Greeks. Exploring the Greeks' and the Bulgarians' perceptions of each other at that time also requires taking into account the passage of Western Europeans through the Balkans during the Crusades. This is when Bulgarians became more aware of how the Greeks were perceived in Western Europe. It is unclear whether the Bulgarians unreservedly trusted all they were told; but as the sources demonstrate, the crusaders and the Bulgarians' shared dislike of the "arrogant" *Rōmaioi* turned them into allies of

twelfth century is the earliest possible date for its composition. The representations of St. Cyril and St. Methodius in medieval Bulgarian literature are discussed in Д. Ангелов, „Кирил и Методий в средновековната българска книжнина“. *Археология*, 3 (1963), 13–22. Angelov argues that at the time of the Byzantine rule, Cyril and Methodius's work was "Bulgarianized," that is, their fame as Slavic teachers was replaced by an image of them as "teachers of the Bulgarian people."

sorts. As it is well known, the Byzantines treated the arrival of the crusaders' into their lands with overt hostility. This revived the entrenched stereotype about the "Greek cunning," which the Bulgarians had experienced on many occasions. At the same time, like the Bulgarians, some of the crusader chroniclers appreciated the rich cultural heritage of the ancient Greeks even as they thought that their heirs, the *Rōmaioi*, lacked many of the best qualities of their ancestors. For example, Richard of London, who participated in the Third Crusade, wrote in his travelogue that the hostile attitude of the Greeks towards the Western knights derived from "the long-standing and unrelenting hatred that the Greeks have always harbored towards the Latins" and that that "has gone down, from generation to generation, throughout the ages." Richard's words refer his readers back to Antiquity when, in his view, the Greek hatred of the Latins emerged. His statement also suggests that once established, perceptions of and prejudice against the other can be transferred unchanged from one generation to the next. Yet, according to Richard, the hatred between Greeks and Latins could not be ascribed solely to inherited perceptions; it was also due to the fact that "as science and the military arts flourished among the Latins, the Greeks became aware of their complete ignorance and cowardice."⁶³

The perceptions of Odon de Deuil, chronicler of the Second Crusade, about the Greeks are similar to Richard's. Odon insisted that the Greeks had irretrievably lost their military virtues. In his view, they had become completely effeminate.⁶⁴ The conclusion that logically followed from such

⁶³ Ricardus Londoniensis. *Itinerarium peregrinorum*. In: ЛИБИ. София 1965, III: 304–5. The author articulates an idea that was very popular in Western Europe, i.e., that the Latin-speaking world rather than the Greeks is the true heir of the accomplishments and virtues of the ancient Greeks. About the Greeks, he states, "They are a treacherous tribe, an unfit and degenerate offspring whose former glory is as striking as their present loss of dignity. Once gold turns into dross, wheat turns into chaff, cleanliness into dirt, and glory into chaos."

⁶⁴ "The Greeks," Odon says, "completely degenerated into women, setting aside all manliness, in words as in spirit. They easily vow to do what they think we may like them to do, but never keep their vows, nor show any self-respect." Further on he warns, "anyone who has come to know the Greeks will say, if asked, that when they suffer defeat in battle, they become pitiful. But when they get the upper hand, they become arrogant and extremely violent to those in their power." See also А. Николов. „Вярвай или ще те убия“. „Ориенталците“ и кръстоносната пропаганда 1270–1370 г. София 2006, 404–5. Nikolov's monograph quotes numerous examples from various essays propagating

devastating western critiques of the Greeks was that the Greeks had no right to call themselves “Romans” or to claim being the lawful heirs of ancient Rome’s grandeur and glory. The controversy over who was ancient Rome’s rightful heir flared up at the time of the Third Crusade, when the Byzantine emperor Isaac II Angelos and Emperor Frederick II Barbarossa engaged in a fierce ideological conflict. The chronicler Ansbert revealed many curious details from the letters of the two rulers and from their indirect exchanges in which they constantly attacked each other.⁶⁵ It is possible that the Bulgarian leaders Asen and Peter deliberately used the crusaders’ perception of the Greeks as usurpers of rights and glory to legitimize their own claim to power. According to Ansbert, they tried to obtain Frederick’s recognition by offering him impressive military support on two occasions, in Niš and later in Adrianople. Not incidentally, it is on the second occasion, when the controversy between Isaac and Frederick over the Roman legacy threatened to turn into full-scale war, that Peter asked the crusaders’ leader to confer upon him “the crown of the Greek kingdom” (*et coronam imperialem regni Graeciae ab eo sibi imponi*).⁶⁶ Intriguingly, Ansbert says that when Peter asked for this crown, he was already calling himself emperor. As Ansbert specifies further on, Peter’s men called him “emperor of Greece” (*de suis dictus imperator Graeciae*).⁶⁷ It is unclear whether Ansbert made a mistake or

the Crusades in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These essays repeat Odon’s contention that the Greeks lacked military virtues and, to make up for them, recur to cunning and treachery. For example, Gautier Map contended that the Greeks started losing their valor as far back as the Trojan War when they vanquished the knights’ ancestors for the last time. In his words, the power of the Greeks “dried out after the Trojan War during which only treachery could defeat Achilles strength.” He also wrote that “there’s nothing praiseworthy about the Greeks, nothing distinctive.” For the gradual emergence of negative stereotypes about the Greeks in the West during the eleventh and the twelfth centuries, see Carrier, *op. cit.*, 17ff.

⁶⁵ Ansbert. *Historia de expeditione Friderici imperatoris*. In: ЛИБИ. София 1965, III: 271–2. For the development of this conflict and for other contemporaneous accounts of it, see П. Петров. *Възстановяване на българската държава*. София 1985, 199; К. Гагова. *Кръстоносните походи и средновековна България*. София 2004, 86 сл. It becomes clear that after the first fierce clash, Emperor Isaac II Angelos modified his stance, and the rivals reached an agreement that gave the crusaders safe passage out of Byzantium.

⁶⁶ Ansbert, *op. cit.*, 279. Peter’s demand is also recorded in *Historia peregrinorum*. In: ЛИБИ. София 1965, III: 241.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 290.

whether Assen and Peter really claimed “the crown of the Greek kingdom.”⁶⁸ In any case, the Bulgarians and the crusaders were ready to leave behind their dislike of each other and seek a rapprochement, largely motivated by their shared hatred of the *Rōmaioi*. Obviously, neither accepted the Byzantine emperors’ claim that the Greeks had been “chosen by God” to rule over other peoples. Moreover, the uprising of the Bulgarians was about to refute the Byzantine image of invincibility that had been upheld for centuries. Assen’s resistance to this image is attested in an address to his soldiers, which Niketas Choniates recorded in his *History*. In it, Assen compared Isaac II Angelos and his brother Alexius III, who dethroned Isaac. Assen warned against forming impressions of a person’s qualities, or the lack thereof, based solely on rumors. In his view, “it is good to make our eyes the judge of people’s talk and so send rumors away.” The words that Choniates ascribed to Assen reveal how the medieval person obtained the information he needed to form impressions of “the Other.” Clearly, one could get such information either through rumors and gossip or from personal experience. Further on, Assen confidently stated that “the *Rōmaioi* are now weak of body and spirit; we have defeated them many times, and they have never been able to regain their former positions.” Additionally, the Bulgarian ruler asserted that the *Rōmaioi* had “brought God’s anger upon themselves because they unlawfully stripped of his royal power Isaac who freed them from heavy tyranny.”⁶⁹ We can conclude, then, that by the end of the twelfth century, the Bulgarians not only resisted the myth of the Byzantine invincibility, but also ascribed other deficiencies to them, such as failure to respect the legitimacy of the emperor’s power and a lack of gratitude to their saviors.

Numerous sources demonstrate that after the Bulgarians regained their independence in 1187, their perceptions of the Byzantines still included controversial and even incompatible features. Thus, even though their

⁶⁸ Златарски, *История*, III: 49–50. According to Zlatarski, Peter would have been too naive if he had expected that Frederick I would have granted him the crown of the Byzantine *basileus*. Hence, Zlatarski thinks that Ansbert’s words should not be taken literally; instead, Peter probably asked that the German emperor recognize him as the tsar of the reinstated Bulgarian kingdom. The different historiographic interpretations of Ansbert’s expression “the crown of the Greek kingdom” are discussed in Петров, *op. cit.*, 206.

⁶⁹ Nicetas Choniates. *Historia*. In: ГИБИ. София 1983, XI: 49. This address reflects in part the Byzantine chronicler’s own views and contains his own judgment on the Roman outlook. See Ангелов, *България и българите*, 230.

lengthy subjection to foreign rule had reinforced the negative perception of the Greeks, the Bulgarians keep their respect for the capabilities and knowledge of the Greeks. Indeed, the newly reinstated Bulgarian state used a number of Byzantine models in rebuilding its administration and state apparatus. Various institutions were directly borrowed from Byzantium.⁷⁰ Clearly this “Byzantinization” suggests that despite their traditional prejudice against the Greeks, the Bulgarians valued the Greeks’ skills. Hence, it is only logical that Bulgaria mastered and developed further the rich Greek traditions in construction, the visual arts, and literature. Additionally, the spread of hesychasm in the fourteenth century reinforced the Bulgarians’ feeling that as far as faith was concerned the similarities between them and the Greeks outnumbered the differences. This, however, was not true of their political relations. Their fierce territorial rivalries, as well as the ego-driven ambitions of their rulers, caused the image of “the enemy” to resurface on many occasions, overshadowing all positive outcomes of the centuries-long interaction between the two peoples. Events from Tsar Kaloyan’s reign illustrate this process particularly well.

Kaloyan’s extant correspondence with Pope Innocent III demonstrates that in the course of their talks about a possible union of Bulgaria with the Roman Church, the critical attitude toward the Greeks resurfaced. In fact, Kaloyan had no reason to like the Greeks: he had been held hostage in Constantinople as a warranty of truce between the Bulgarians and the Greeks in 1187. Byzantium had also played a part in the assassinations of his two brothers. All this worked in Innocent III’s favor, which is why he decided to play upon Kaloyan’s anti-Greek sentiments in his attempts at a rapprochement with the Bulgarian ruler. Yet, paradoxically, Kaloyan’s mistrust of the Greeks became the main reason why he took almost three years to reply to the Pope’s first letter.⁷¹ Vasil Zlatarski accurately notes that Kaloyan’s suspicion must have been provoked by the fact that the Pope’s envoy had served as the arch-

⁷⁰ М. Андреев, Д. Ангелов. *История на българската феодална държава и право*. София 1972, 136 сл.; И. Билярски. *Институциите на средновековна България. Второ българско царство (XII–XIV в.)*. София 1998.

⁷¹ Innocentii III Papae *Epistolae*. In: *ЛИБИ* София 1965, III: 310–1. In his first letter, Kaloyan explained the delay, stating, “Do not be surprised that your envoy did not come back to you quickly. We were suspicious of him because many have come to our kingdom, trying to mislead us. But we know best how to guard ourselves against anyone.”

presbyter of the Greeks in the town of Brindisi.⁷² The Greek origins of the envoy and the stereotype of the cunning Greeks were the reason for initial reservations of the Bulgarian tsar. In this case, Kaloyan's suspicions did not prove to be true; however, it soon became clear that other Greeks were trying to prevent by all possible means his correspondence with Rome. Archbishop Basil of Tŭrnovo wrote about the situation in one of his letters to the Pope. Basil informed the Pope that one reason why the Bulgarians had decided to ask for Rome's protection was their feeling that the Greeks detested them. For example, he asserted that Constantinople would not send Basil chrism for his liturgies because "the Greeks hate us, as they hate you" (*Sed de cetero nos tamquam et vos Greci exsosos habent*).⁷³ In the same letter, the archbishop complained that the Greeks from Dyrrachion sabotaged his travel to Rome. They had threatened him that if he and his numerous companions sailed to Rome, he would be "thrown into the sea."⁷⁴ This is why Basil entrusted the letter to two of his closest associates – the constable Serge and the presbyter Constantine – and he returned to Tŭrnovo, taking back with him numerous presents for the Pope. Basil's description of the Greeks' attitude brings to mind the reign of Boris I when the Bulgarian and Roman Churches had enjoyed a brief rapprochement based on their mutual mistrust of Constantinople. The analogy I am drawing between these two periods underscores the importance of "the language of perceptions" in the political relations of Bulgaria with other European countries throughout the centuries. The savvy diplomatic use of this language could yield surprisingly good results, but it could also mislead the negotiating parties. Knowing how and when to use the existing perceptions of the others, without letting them interfere with your rational decision-making, was an important skill.

Among the official letters, addresses, treaties, and other documents, there are also less formal sources that reveal how thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Bulgarians perceived the *Rōmaioi*. In the *Prophecy of the Sibyl*, in which the Greeks are referred to both as Hellenes and Greeks, the anonymous Bulgarian author describes various peoples: Bulgarians, Georgians, Franks, Jews, and so on. However, while the writer ascribes many virtues to almost all of these peoples, the Greeks are described mostly negatively, "They move

⁷² Златарски, *История*, III, 154.

⁷³ Inocentius III Папа, *op. cit.*, 337.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 336.

kings around, they mix with other peoples, they brag and commit perjury, they are prideful and power-loving, their judges take bribes and will betray God's kingdom even as they profess love for the Church."⁷⁵ Except for the assertion that "they love their church," this statement says nothing good about the Greeks. Some scholars have interpreted the expression "they move kings around" in a positive light, as it emphasizes the superiority of the Byzantine emperor over other rulers and underscores the significance of Byzantine imperial ideology.⁷⁶ Such an interpretation, however, does not seem convincing to me. I would argue that here the author refers to the Greeks' habits of meddling in the affairs of other countries and of plotting the dethronement of their rulers. The history of Bulgarian-Byzantine relations in the thirteenth century is full of instances whereby Constantinople's interference determined the fate of Tŭrnovo's crown. This may more accurately be the reason the Greeks are described as people who "move kings around."

The above description of the Greeks is indirectly confirmed by another Bulgarian source – the *Razumnik* – an apocryphal creation of medieval popular culture, which treats a range of important issues in a question-and-answer format.⁷⁷ Here, one can find a description of various peoples by drawing analogies between each of them and a specific animal. Interestingly, the Greeks are likened to the fox, which was known to be clever and cunning.⁷⁸ In the bestiary *Physiologos*, for example, which was translated from Greek into Bulgarian perhaps at some point during the First Bulgarian Kingdom, the fox is described as "a very cunning animal," similar to Satan, who tries to tempt and mislead man.⁷⁹

Another intriguing Bulgarian source that reflects certain prejudices against the morals of the Greeks is the *Lives* of the Russian saints and brothers,

⁷⁵ Тъпкова-Заимова, Милтенова, *op. cit.*, 272.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁷⁷ For a comprehensive study of the genre, see А. Милтенова. *Erotapokriseis. Съчиненията от кратки въпроси и отговори в старобългарската литература*. София 2004. For an English translation of a tenth-century representative of the genre, see Petkov, *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria*, 135-140, no. 102.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 305.

⁷⁹ И. Кристанов, И. Дуйчев. *Естествознанието в Средновековна България (Сборник от исторически извори)*. София 1954, 177.

Boris and Gleb, in the 1330 *Lesnovo Prolog*. The medieval Bulgarians were interested in these saints, in part because, according to the Russian historical record, the saints' mother was Bulgarian (a hypothesis mentioned in the early chronicle *Tale of Bygone Years*.⁸⁰ The chronicle relates that "Vladimir surrendered to female lust," and then lists Vladimir's many wives and children. His wife Rogneda gave birth to "four sons – Izyaslav, Mystislav, Yaroslav, and Vsevolod – and two daughters; his Greek wife gave birth to Svetopolk; his Czech wife to Visheslav; another wife to Svetoslav and Mystislav; and his Bulgarian wife to Boris and Gleb." The *Lives* of the saintly brothers conveys this information more briefly: "Vladimir had wives from many different peoples. One of them was Greek, another Bulgarian. The latter gave birth to the two saints: Roman and David [the names given Boris and Gleb when they were baptized], while the Greek gave birth to the illegitimate ruler Svetopolk who plotted the murder of his brothers."⁸¹ This text is chiefly interesting for the way it presents Boris and Gleb's origin, on the one hand, and Svetoslav's, on the other. Although the writer did not mention the other brothers' origin, as the Russian chronicle did, he found it necessary to emphasize that one of them, Svetopolk, was an illegitimate ruler. It is not incidental that the author clarified that the respected saints Boris and Gleb had a Bulgarian mother, while the fratricidal Svetopolk was born to a Greek woman. The deliberate distinction between the brothers' origins sought to convince the reader of the moral superiority of the Bulgarians.

The perceptions of the Greeks – both good and bad – changed little in Bulgaria in the fourteenth century. As in earlier centuries, the political situation and the cultural communication between the Greeks and the Bulgarians influenced how the Bulgarians viewed the Greeks. The practice of hesychasm, which became very influential at that time, played an important part in enhancing cultural communication.⁸² Under its influence, Bulgarians and Greeks lived and worked together both in new foundations and in the old monasteries of Sozopolis and Mesembria on the Black Sea coast, and on

⁸⁰ А. П. Адрианова-Перетц. *Повесть временных лет. По лаврентьевской летописи 1322 г.* Москва–Ленинград 1950, 56, 57.

⁸¹ Б. Ангелов. *Из историята на руско-българските литературни връзки.* София 1972, 58–9.

⁸² See П. Сырку. *К истории исправления книг в Болгарии в XIV веке.* Санкт-Петербург 1898, I (1): 24–141; Д. Ангелов. *Българинът в средновековието (светоглед, идеология, душевност).* Варна 1985, 248–71.

Mount Athos.⁸³ The monastery established by Gregory of Sinai in the Strandja Mountains became especially famous, attracting some of the most prominent hesychasts. Gradually, a new kind of religious and public figure appeared in the Balkans: one who worked across political borders and ethnic divides and who acted independently of established cultural stereotypes. These monks translated Greek works and shared the respect of their predecessors for the education of the Byzantines. Patriarch Euthymius held a special position among them. In his *Panagyric of Patriarch Euthymius*, Gregory Tsamblak emphasized that among the Patriarch's chief contributions were his translations of "the sacred books from Hellenic to Bulgarian."⁸⁴ Isaiah of Serres was another well-known cleric who expressed his great respect for the education of the Greeks and their sophisticated literature. In his notable preface to his translation of Dionysius the Areopagite's work, Isaiah writes, "In the various places where our Slavic people live, many devoted their time to translating the sacred texts from the wise, sophisticated, and valuable Hellenic language." Further in the same preface, he expresses his respect for the Greeks again: "In fact, from the very beginning God pronounced the Greek language the most sophisticated and beautiful, and in later periods lovers of wisdom perfected it further."⁸⁵

Unfortunately, few intellectuals in Bulgaria and in Byzantium were able to foresee the disastrous long-term effects of the prejudice and mistrust that Balkan peoples held against each other. One of them was the famous writer and orator Demetrios Kydones, a Greek who argued in one of his speeches that the *Mysoi* and the *Triballoi* (i.e., the Bulgarians and the Serbs) were people "like us."⁸⁶ In another work of his *Apology*, he explicitly expressed

⁸³ Vasil Gjuzelev analyzes the cities on the Black-Sea coast as places where Bulgarians and Greeks came into contact in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in В. Гюзелев. *Училища, скриптории, библиотеки и знания в България XIII–XIV в.* София 1985, 111–3. For a discussion of the cultural connections among the Balkan peoples in this period, see also И. Дуйчев. „Литературни отношения между византийците, българите и сърбите през XIV–XV в.” In: idem. *Византия и славянският свят.* София 1998, 1, 128–68.

⁸⁴ For English translations, see Buttler. *Monumenta Bulgarica* 268–289 and Petkov, *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria*, 355–377, no. 148.

⁸⁵ В. Гюзелев. *Извори за средновековната история на България (VII–XV в.) в австрийските ръкописни сбирки и архиви.* София 1994, 1, 32.

⁸⁶ Demetrios Kydoni *Oratio pro subsidio Latinorum.* PGr, col. 912. "Our people stick to the old distinctions out of habit and divide people in two groups: Greeks and barbarians.

his displeasure at the Greek's continuing disdain for other peoples.⁸⁷ The fifteenth-century Bulgarian writer Dimitar Kantakouzenos also criticized the Bulgarians and the Greeks for harboring mistrust and hatred for each other on the eve of the Ottoman conquest. In his *Vita and Short Encomium of St. John of Rila*, Kantakouzenos wrote, "I cannot reprimand the Bulgarians for [how they acted in the] beginning, when they were not enlightened by the faith; but [I do reprimand them] for not denouncing evil after they were baptized in the same faith; I loathe and denounce their cruelty and inhumanness. But neither can I praise the Greeks' pride, exalted by arrogant minds. It is exactly because they held grudges against each other and shed each other's blood like water – which should not happen even between people of different faiths – that they are now getting what they wished for."⁸⁸

The negative stereotypes of the Greeks must have also strongly influenced the author of the fifteenth-century *Anonymous Bulgarian Chronicle*.⁸⁹ This becomes particularly clear in his story about Emperor John Kantakouzenos attempt to organize an anti-Ottoman coalition in 1351. Despite the factual inaccuracies, the story is intriguing in how it described the behavior of the Bulgarians. According to the chronicler, they "mocked and disrespected the Greeks. Not only did they offend the Greeks, but also cursed them and uttered profanities about their wives and mothers and sent them away empty-handed."⁹⁰ Even if the author exaggerated, his words suggest that even when important political decisions were at stake, fourteenth-century Bulgarians remained trapped by their prejudice against the Greeks.

It appears that some of these stereotypes persisted into the following centuries regardless that the two peoples shared suffering under the Ottoman rule. One explanation for the persistently negative attitude of the Bulgarians

Moreover, they insist completely senselessly and ignorantly, that the latter [i.e., the barbarians] should best be ignored as though they were donkeys and bulls."

⁸⁷ G. Mercati. *Notizie di Procoro e Demetrio Cidone, Manuele Caleca e Teodoro Meliteniote ed altri appunti per storia della teologia e della literature byzantina del secolo XIV*. Citta de Vaticana 1931, 365.

⁸⁸ Димитър Кантакузин. „Житие с малка похвала на Иван Рилски“. In: Иванова, *Стара българска литература*, IV: 157.

⁸⁹ „Безименна българска летопис“. In: И. Божилов, съст. и ред. *Стара българска литература*, III. *Исторически съчинения*. София 1983.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 86.

towards the Greeks transpires in the *Story about the Reestablishment of the Bulgarian and Serbian Patriarchates*, of which three transcriptions dating between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries are still extant.⁹¹ The story recycles yet again staple stereotypes about the Greeks, including their cunning and their greed. Traces of these stereotypes can be discerned in the fifteenth-seventeenth century, mostly in sources discussing the relations between the Greek and the Bulgarian clergy. Some intriguing examples are gathered in Nadīja Danova's study of the Greeks' image in Bulgarian literature. She focuses on written sources from the sixteenth century on and demonstrates the survival of a number of medieval perceptions about the Greeks into the period of the Ottoman rule.⁹²

The range of the written sources I have quoted demonstrates, among other things, how the different ethnonyms that the Bulgarians used to refer to the subjects of Byzantium informed various aspects of the Greek image. Medieval authors frequently chose to use a particular ethnonym for the value judgment it connoted. The Byzantines, too, often used this tactic by applying various archaic ethnonyms to the Bulgarians: Huns, *Mysoi*, Scythians, Vlachs, etc.⁹³

It was the ancient Romans, or more accurately the Romanized population from the border provinces of the Roman Empire, who spread the name "Greek" in all European languages.⁹⁴ In this way, the name "Greek" came to the barbarians not as a neutral reference to an ethnicity, but charged with all the negative Roman stereotypes about the Greeks. While the Byzantines used the name "Romans" (*Rōmaioi*) purely ideologically, i.e., to emphasize the continuity between Byzantium and the former Roman Empire, the name "Greek" referred to a person's specific ethnicity and denomination.⁹⁵ The

⁹¹ И. Божилков, съст. и ред. *Стара българска литература, III. Исторически съчинения*. София 1983, 85.

⁹² Н. Данова. „Образът на гърците, сърбите, албанците и румънците в българската книжнина“. In: *Връзки на съвместимост и несъвместимост между християни и мюсюлмани в България*. София 1994, 57 сл.

⁹³ Г. Литаврин. „Некоторые особенности этнонимов в византийских источниках“. In: *Вопросы этногенеза и этнической истории славян и восточных романцев*. Москва 1976, 198–217.

⁹⁴ G. Moravcsik. *Einführung in die Byzantologie*. Budapest 1976, 56.

⁹⁵ Г. Литаврин. „Византийцы и славяне – взаимные представления“. In: *Византия и славяне (сборник статей)*. Санкт-Петербург 1999, 590 сл.; idem. „Представления

term “Hellenes,” which entered usage about the same time, not only implied continuity between the cultures of Byzantium and ancient Greece, but also aimed to replace the ethnonym “Greek,” which was used largely negatively in Western Europe.⁹⁶ According to Vasilka Tăpkova-Zaimova, the medieval Bulgarian and Slavic uses of the term “Greek” connoted considerably less hostility and disdain than the Western European uses. Frequently, the use of “Greek” was completely free of affect; instead, the term simply denoted all things Byzantine.⁹⁷ In addition to the widespread use of the term “Greeks,” however, Bulgarian sources also used the name “Hellenes.” What kind of nuance did the writers try to convey by using “Hellenes”? Undoubtedly, the two terms were sometimes used interchangeably. For instance, in the preface to his translation of “About Heavens” by John of Damascus, John Exarch says, “one cannot always find exact equivalents for Hellenic words.” However, further in the preface, as he gives specific examples of the difficulty of finding exact equivalents, he calls the original language “Greek” rather than “Hellenic.”⁹⁸ Tsamblak again uses the two terms interchangeably in his *Panegyric of Patriarch Euthymius* in describing his teacher’s literary works and translations of Greek texts.⁹⁹

Other sources, however, do not use “Greek” and “Hellenic” synonymously. Medieval Bulgarian writers sometimes use “Hellenic” in its religious sense as a synonym of “pagan.” A typical example of this use can be found in Hrabr the Monk’s statement that the Greek letters were created by the “Hellenic pagans.” Similarly, in *Hexameron*, John Exarch refers to the ancient Greek philosophers, whose views he rejects, as “Hellenes” to emphasize that they were pagans.¹⁰⁰ Presbyter Kosmas uses “Hellenes” to the same end in his tenth-century *Sermon Against the Bogomils* where he accuses the Bogomils

варваров о Византии и византийцах, VI–X вв.“ *Византийский временник*, 46 (1986), 100–8.

⁹⁶ This thesis is also defended in H. Ahrweiler. *L’ideologie politique de l’empire Byzantine*. Paris 1975, 60ff.

⁹⁷ Тъпкова-Займова, Милтенова, *op. cit.* 91.

⁹⁸ Йоан Екзарх. „Богословие (Небеса)”, прев. К. Иванова. In: К. Иванова, С. Николова. *Тържество на словото. Златният век на българската книжнина*. София 1995, 183.

⁹⁹ Григорий Цамблак. „Похвално слово за Патриарх Евтимий”. In: Грашева, *Стара българска литература*, II: 228.

¹⁰⁰ Йоан Екзарх. *Шестоднев*. София 1981, 46, 77, 96, 271.

of being false and deceitful: “Those who bow to the icons are like the Hellenes.”¹⁰¹ And the apocryphal *Story of John the Theologian* prophesies grave suffering to “those Hellenes who worship the stars, the sun, the moon, and idols.”¹⁰² In the story, the Hellenes are compared to two other avowed antagonists to the Christian faith: the heretics and the Jews. In Gregory the Theologian’s translation of “Sermon about Christ’s Birth,” “Hellenes” again signifies “pagans.” All who doubted that Christ was born were addressed as follows: “Let the Jews be tempted, let the Hellenes mock, let the heretics run their mouths.”¹⁰³

These examples suggest that in sources which made cultural and religious distinctions between the pagan antiquity and the medieval Christian world, the terms “Hellenes” and “Greeks” could be used both as synonyms and as historically distinct signifiers. The term “Romans” (*Rōmaioi*), however, did not fit this pattern.

In most cases, medieval Bulgarian writers used “Roman” and “Greek” interchangeably. At first, this seems logical; the Greeks were the largest ethnic group in Byzantium, and Greek had been the empire’s official language since the seventh century. A look at Byzantine writing in translation in medieval Bulgaria demonstrates that the Byzantine term *Rōmaioi*, commonly used to refer to the empire’s subjects, was most often translated as “Greeks” or, literally, as “Romans.” Occasionally, “Romans” was also translated as “Hellenes.” One exception is the thirteenth-century *Prophetic Legend* by Pandeh, in which the Byzantines are literally called *Rōmaioi*.¹⁰⁴ Research has shown that from the tenth century on, the term “Romans” gradually lost its purely ideological sense and started being used as a referent to the Greeks only, not to the Georgians, Armenians, or Bulgarians, who at that point had been subjects of the empire for almost two centuries.¹⁰⁵ Was the use

¹⁰¹ Презвитер Козма. *Беседа против богомилите*, прев. В. Киселков. Карнобат 1921, 75. For English translations, see Buttler. *Monumenta Bulgarica* 160-168 and Petkov, *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria*, 68-83, no. 82.

¹⁰² „Сказание на Йоан Богослов и евангелист“. In: А. Милтенова, Д. Петканова. *Старобългарска есхатология. Антология*. София 1993, 70.

¹⁰³ Григорий Богослов. „Слово за Рождество Христово“, прев. М. Спасова. In: Иванова, Николова, *Тържество на словото*, 120.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 247.

¹⁰⁵ Литаврин, „Некоторые особенности“, 210.

of “Greeks” rather than “Romans” in reference to Byzantium’s subjects in medieval Bulgarian literature motivated by value judgment? According to G. Litavrin, Bulgarians in some cases deliberately avoided the name “Romans” or the expression “Roman kingdom,” making explicit their refusal to accept the Greeks’ claims to superiority and privilege in the Christian world. To illustrate his thesis, Litavrin cites the *Life of Constantine the Philosopher* and Hrabr the Monk’s *Treatise on the Letters*, in which neither the Byzantine emperor nor his empire are referred to as “Roman,” perhaps intentionally.¹⁰⁶ If the omission was indeed intentional, we need to evaluate it within the context of the period in which these works circulated. These texts were written during the reign of Tsar Symeon (893–927), who persistently tried to conquer Constantinople and proclaim himself “Emperor of Bulgarians and Romans.” He refused to accept Emperor Roman I Lakapenos as a legitimate ruler and called on him to give up his crown so that the much-coveted peace between the Bulgarians and the “Romans” could become a reality. Of course, these observations are tentative. Only a closer analysis of each source can reveal the extent to which the Bulgarians use of specific names for to the Greeks aimed to suggest a particular perception of or attitude toward them.

This analysis of the medieval Bulgarians’ perceptions of the Greeks leads to a couple of important conclusions. First, the perceptions circulated mainly among the Bulgarian secular and clerical intellectual elites. While they could have been able to shape wider views to a degree, we do not know to what extent the average Bulgarians shared them. As I argued, the Greek’s image is a very general one, based on some recurring themes, but it does not in any way convey the specific outlooks and values of the various social categories in Byzantium. Often, generalizations about the Greeks’ good or bad qualities were based on the behaviors of single individuals: rulers, clerics, administrators, military commanders, diplomats, traders, etc. Second, there were two layers to the medieval Bulgarian’s image of the Greeks. The first comprises traditional stereotypes about the Greeks that had emerged in Antiquity and persisted in the medieval world. The second layer derives from the immediate economic, political, and cultural encounters between medieval Bulgaria and Byzantium. The resulting contradictory image was shaped by

¹⁰⁶ Литаврин, *Византийцы и славяне*, 598 сл.

a variety of circumstances. The religious and cultural encounters between the two peoples brought attention to certain positive Greek qualities that the Bulgarians sought to emulate. By contrast, the Greek emperors' political ambitions unfailingly revived the negative image of the enemy. Hence, we face a paradox: while the Bulgarians emulated and adopted a number of Byzantine political and cultural practices, they were also careful to distance themselves from those elements of the Greek outlook that the medieval world disliked and rejected.



**THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE OTTOMAN CONQUERORS
AND THE BALKAN STATES IN THE 1370s–1380s:
TYPOLOGICAL ASPECTS**

Hristo Matanov

Rarely has a modern scholar of the Ottoman invasion missed an occasion to underscore the crucial significance of the Battle of Černomen (26 September 1371) for the emergence of the new “great power” in the Balkans: the Ottoman Empire.¹ A look at the events and developments taking place in the last quarter of the fourteenth century convincingly indicates that the battle on the banks of the Maritsa river that ended so tragically for the Christians, offered the Asian intruders at first potential, but later increasingly real and obvious military and political leverage over the splintered Christian world in the Balkans, consumed with controversy. An attempt to reconstruct the pattern that underpinned the successful Ottoman conquest in the 1370s–1380s will reveal the conquerors’ amazing ability to impose their presence not so much through direct military action as by converting the Balkan kingdoms or principalities into their vassal states. The Battle of Černomen brought to light this pattern, which was instrumental to the victorious pace of the Ottoman invasion.²

A scrupulous examination of the actual events and timeline causing one or another Christian state in the Balkans to become an Ottoman vassal falls beyond the scope of this paper.³ Nonetheless, the subjugation of the entire constellation of Balkan kingdoms and principalities into Ottoman vassalage—from Byzantium (including Byzantine Morea) through the Bulgarian kingdoms in Moesia, the principalities in Macedonia, Serbia, continental Greece and the

¹ Г. Острогорски. *Историја Византије*. Београд 1959, 502; И. Дуйчев. „От Черномен до Косово поле. Към историята на турското завоевание в Тракия през последните десетилетия на XIV в.“. In: Ив. Дуйчев. *Българско Средновековие*. София 1972, 558–9.

² Х. Матанов, Р. Михнева. *От Галиполи до Лепанто. Балканите, Европа и османското нашествие (1354–1571 г.)*. София 1988, 52 ff.

³ Ibid.

Albanian lands all the way to the rulers along the Adriatic coast – gave the Ottoman Empire a highly specific territorial and political outlook. Figuratively speaking, during the 1370s–1380s it roughly resembled a planetary model. Its territorial core in Thrace was surrounded by a gravitating host of vassal Christian lands whose rulers paid annual tribute to the Ottoman treasury (*kharaj*), dispatched auxiliary forces to the Ottoman army, not infrequently personally joined the Ottoman campaigns, including against other Islamic states in Asia, and acknowledged the sultan's supremacy. In return for all these obligations they received often chimerical promises that the Ottomans would not attack them and would respect their domestic autonomy.

For nearly two decades after the Battle of Černomen this system ran like clockwork for the conquerors, largely accounting for their success in the fierce struggle with the Balkan Christians. The *kharaj* filled the Ottoman coffers while the Ottoman tax system was still in the making. The vassal Christian regiments often made a difference in the battlefield; there is all evidence to believe that they in fact introduced the Ottomans to the efficiency of firearms.⁴ The collection and payment of *kharaj* forced an onerous burden on the taxpayers in the vassal lands. Apparently, the vassal rulers everywhere imposed a special “Turkish tax” that destabilized their power, creating additional social and class tensions.⁵ The conquerors could hardly come up with better means to undermine the pillars of Christian statehood in the Balkans.

The scholars of Byzantine history and the medieval Balkan kingdoms take it for granted that the Byzantine-Balkan world in the Middle Ages in principle lacked a ramified network of sovereign-vassal relations typical of the classical feudal regions of Western Europe. Therefore, the relatively quick and pervasive spread of vassalage as a form of interstate relations is somewhat bewildering in the new phase of the Ottoman-Christian collision triggered by the Battle of Černomen. Our purpose here will be if not to explore in full, at least to sketch a possible explanation of the profound reasons for

⁴ X. Шилтбергер. *Пътенис*. Превод от немски по Нюрнбергския ръкопис М. Киселинчева. Редакция, предговор и бележки В. Мутафчиева. София 1971, 34.

⁵ See examples for the individual kingdoms in: N. Oikonomidès. “Le “Haradj” dans l’empire byzantin du XV-e siècle.” In: *Actes du Premier Congrès International des Etudes Balkaniques et Sud-est Européennes*. Sofia 1969, I: 681–8; *Историја српског народа*. Београд 1982, 2: 51; *Историја Црне горе*. Титоград 1970, II: 59.

this development. Several factors determine the need to address this issue. Firstly, the archaic social relations typical of the early Ottoman society and their undeniable place as the conduit of the vassal system during a historically distinct period somehow challenge the notion that vassalage was a trait of mature feudalism. We should therefore strive to identify those elements of the Ottoman political and social structure that determined its peculiar relations with the Balkan political formations at a specific stage of its evolution, without necessarily falling back on labels such as “feudal relations.” Secondly, the question should be approached in the light of the general belief so vastly held in Ottoman studies that the enforcement of Ottoman sovereignty over the Christian kingdoms was a specific Ottoman method of conquest, which only in a matter of years proved its exceptional efficiency.⁶ Anyone aware of the inconsistencies of early Ottoman history⁷ would take with a grain of salt the claims of a well-thought and diligently applied conquest strategy, which in the nick of time managed to fabricate adequate tools for its realization. Such claims merely manifest the myth about the exceptional character of the early Ottomans – a myth too widespread and too resilient to eradicate.

An attempt at a theoretical, historical and typological analysis will present a more compelling case. The theoretical approach will reveal to what extent the vassalage carried over by the Ottomans leaned upon certain pre-existing concepts adopted by the Ottoman ruling élite. The historical and typological analysis, on the other hand, will demonstrate that vassalage had its social roots; it could emerge and exist only at a specific stage of the evolution of the Ottoman society and of the Balkan Christian kingdoms during the period of the Ottoman expansion.

The possibility of placing a Christian state under vassal dependence from a Muslim state was enshrined in the Quran (9: 29): “Fight [...] the People of the Book,⁸ until they pay the *jizya* with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.” The Islamic scholars and theologians that coined

⁶H. Inalcik. “Ottoman Methods of Conquest.” In: H. Inalcik. *The Ottoman Empire: Conquest, Organization and Economy*. London 1978, I: 103–4.

⁷The early Ottoman history followed trajectories much different from the smooth and seamless course so convincingly proposed by the later Ottoman historical narratives. See J. Shinder. “Early Ottoman Administration in the Wilderness: Some Limits on Comparison.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 9 (1978): 497–517.

⁸The Christians and the Jews [H.M.].

the holy law of Islam (*Shariah*) fine-tuned the principle that the populations of towns or communities hostile to Muslims were to be offered three choices: (i) to embrace Islam; (ii) to accept the status of dependent taxpayers; or (iii) to fight to the end, whereupon they were to be treated as heathens, or people without a Holy Book, who had to be exterminated or deprived of all rights. The Hanafi school of law of Sunni Islam discussed in particular detail the relations between Muslims and Christians, essentially boiling them down to the concept of the "holy war" (*jihad*). At least in theory, this became the guiding principle in the relations of the Islamic societies with the Christian world. According to the Hanafi school and its interpretation of the holy war, a non-Muslim state or town could initially be spared, as long as it was forced to acknowledge the supremacy of Muslims. Its subjugation had to be attested by a special levy. The Hanafi school linked this possibility with another element of its ideology of the "ideal" Islamic state: it was supposed to make the non-Muslims work for the ultimate success of the holy war. The recommended way of achieving this was quite familiar to the Western European medieval kingdoms: it involved sending vassal troops. Any peace between Muslims and non-Muslims, however, was perceived as a transient state of affairs. As far as the Muslims were concerned, peace was sustained for so long as it was beneficial for the victorious advancement of Islam.⁹

In line with these general premises of the Hanafi theory, the later Ottoman writers distinguished two approaches in the attitude of their forebears to the "infidels." One was relentless military assault that ended with the destruction of the respective Christian region or city (*yağma*). The other option was never ruled out: in certain cases the same writers recommended or justified calling off the attack and making an agreement with the Christian enemy (*mudara*). The second element of their conquest theory allowed the Ottomans to interfere in the home affairs of any Christian state that had acknowledged its vassal status.¹⁰ In practice both aspects of the conquest theory ran hand in hand, but specific periods may be identified when one or the other prevailed. For instance, between 1354 and 1371 the Ottoman conquest seemed like

⁹ A. Grohmann. "Djihad." In: *Encyclopédie de l'Islam*, II: 551–9; M. Khadurri. *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*. Baltimore 1955, 34–56; W. M. Watt. "Islamic Conceptions of the Holy War." In: T. P. Murphy, ed. *The Holy War*. Columbus 1976, 141–56; M. M. Ali. *The Religion of Islam. A Comprehensive Discussion of the Sources, Principles and Practices of Islam*. Cairo 1967.

¹⁰ N. Filipović. *Princ Musa i šejh Bedreddin*. Sarajevo 1971, 171–2.

an incessant stretch of *yağma*. From 1371 until around 1389 the two forms of conquest blended into an organic whole: the Ottomans imposed vassal dependence on various Christian kingdoms and principalities, coupled with a continued offensive against the lands that refused to acknowledge the Ottoman supremacy or strategically cut through the vassal territories. No other period in the history of the Ottoman conquest witnessed such a harmonious marriage of *yağma* and *mudara*. Between 1389 and 1402, the Ottomans continued enforcing vassalage, but the thrust of their conquest shifted towards frontal assault and limiting the rights of their vassals.¹¹

The scholars that would venture to compare the Ottoman endeavors during the 1370s–1380s with the postulates of Islamic theory about the holy war and the treatment of “infidels” will undoubtedly discover a number of similarities. They should bear in mind, however, that many of the Quran’s and *Shariah*’s prescriptions reflected the nomadic lifestyle and mentality of the Bedouin Arabs that spearheaded the early Arab conquest.¹² Such scholars are bound to face numerous challenges, should they try to identify in the practice of the Ottoman conquest the ideological features of an advanced Islamic society. An immediate question would be whether during this particular period the Ottoman state adhered to the demands of the Islamic theory. Inarguably, the so-called *ulema*, the Muslim religious scholars, facilitated the spread of advanced Islam in the Ottoman milieu, but its penetration was neither quick, nor deep enough at this early stage of Ottoman development. Recent studies have yielded very interesting results. They found, for instance, that in the fourteenth century a great number of Ottoman subjects, who were in theory Muslims, engaged in shamanic practices.¹³ A special study on the implementation of the *jihad* doctrine in the first centuries of the Ottoman Empire discovered unequivocal and rather significant discrepancies.¹⁴ One could safely claim that the writers of relatively late Ottoman historical

¹¹ Маташов, Михнева, *op. cit.*, 57–8.

¹² Watt, *op. cit.*, 141–2. A convergence may therefore be claimed between some of the postulates of the Quran and the sharia and the practice of the early Ottoman nomads.

¹³ S. Vryonis. “Evidence on Human Sacrifice among the Early Ottoman Turks.” In: S. Vryonis, Jr. *Studies on Byzantium, Seljuks and Ottomans*. Malibu 1981, IX, 140–6.

¹⁴ G. Káldy-Nágy. “The Holy War (jihad) in the First Centuries of the Ottoman Empire.” In: I. Ševčenko and F. E. Sysyn, eds. *Eucharisterion: Essays Presented to Omeljan Pritsak on His Sixtieth Birthday by His Colleagues and Students*. (Harvard Ukrainian Studies, 3–4). Cambridge, Mass. 1979–1980, 467–73.

narratives went out of their way to squeeze the facts of the early Ottoman invasion into the Procrustean bed of the holy war theory.

Other circumstances also frequently escape due notice. If the enforcement of Ottoman sovereignty over the Balkan kingdoms and principalities was backed by specific dictums of Islamic theory, why did it manifest itself in a specific historical period and why, in no less specific other periods, its significance dwindled to ancillary functions? Why at the time of Bayezid I (1389–1402), who, according to many scholars and the anonymous Ottoman chronicles, was largely influenced by the *ulema* and dreamed of creating a universal Islamic empire, the sovereignty over the Christian rulers was bypassed in favor of direct conquest and restriction of vassal autonomy?¹⁵ Furthermore, if the Ottoman vassal system is seen as a *sui generis* continuation of the *uç* system in the Balkan realities of the fourteenth century, as Halil Inalcik has suggested¹⁶, why did it fail to spread in 1354–1371? Didn't Irene Beldiceanu-Steinherr convincingly show that the Ottoman conquest in the Balkans during this period was carried out not by the central government but by individual *uç beys*?¹⁷ If the *uç* system was so widespread and important, it could have been expected to transmute into sovereign-vassal relations already in the first phase of the Ottoman expansion in the Balkans. This was not the case. From 1354 throughout 1371 the Ottoman invasion resembled an uncompromising, persistent “*ghazwat*.”

I believe the profound reasons for the Ottoman conquerors' desire to cordon off their possessions with a vassal Christian belt at a particular point of their development can only be unraveled by taking into account the specific aspects of the early Ottoman social and political evolution. The crux of the matter is that Ottoman studies have long failed to grasp, and in a sense still fail to perceive clearly, the driving forces of that development. An incontestable scholarly achievement has been the compelling critique and the practical rebuttal of Paul Wittek's popular theory that the early Ottoman state was a communal constellation of “*ghazi*” (fighters for the Faith) whose *raison d'être*

¹⁵ Матанов, Михнева, *op. cit.*, 58.

¹⁶ Inalcik, *op. cit.*, 103–4.

¹⁷ I. Beldiceanu-Steinherr. “La conquête d'Adrinople par les Turcs, la pénétration turque en Thrace et la valeur des chroniques ottomanes.” In: *Travaux et Mémoires*. Paris 1965, I, 439–61.

was the idea of the *ghazwat*.¹⁸ Many contemporary scholars have convincingly and systematically argued the nomadic nature of the early Ottoman state.¹⁹ Hence, its evolution and features during the fourteenth century should find adequate parallels in the typology of nomadic development without prejudice to the “Ottoman” idiosyncrasy of social dynamics. Since this is the subject of another study, for the time being it will suffice to map the special characteristics of “nomadism” that could give a clue to the problem examined in this paper.

The defining feature of the early Ottoman state was the growth of a nomadic society that successfully, and relatively quickly, evolved from the more primitive to the more advanced stages of nomadism. Hardly any facet of the social, economic, and political development of the Ottoman *beylik* has escaped in its generic or specific forms the nomadic social model so aptly crafted by the Soviet researcher Svetlana Pletnyova.²⁰ Indeed, because the evolution of nomadic societies was in equal measure the product of their inherent features and the resistance they encountered in their path, the incentives for the evolution of the Ottoman *beylik* need to be identified not only in its internal structure, but also in the surrounding environment that provided the backdrop for its maturity and evolution.

The key factor is that nomadic societies cannot exist in isolation. The nomad economies, typically running along a single track, must at all times be in contact with agrarian populations, or agricultural societies. The type of contact varies, depending as much on the evolutionary stage of the nomads as it depends on the developmental level of the respective agricultural societies. The lower the stage of nomadism, the more primitive is its interaction with the settled populations, usually leading to open plunder and seizure of arable lands for pasture. Later on, a possible “symbiosis” may emerge, where the nomads would preserve the autonomy of the settled agricultural populations, but would enforce their political authority, exacting agricultural goods or

¹⁸ P. Wittek. “Les Ghazis, dans l’histoire ottomane.” In: P. Wittek. *La formation de l’Empire ottoman*. London 1982, I–II; H. Inalcik. “The Question of the Emergence of the Ottoman State.” *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, 2.2 (1982): 75–9, and a critique of his concept in: R. P. Lindner. “Stimulus and Justification in Early Ottoman History.” *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 27. 2–3 (1992): 207–24; idem. *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*. Bloomington 1983, 1–43.

¹⁹ Lindner, *op. cit.*, passim.

²⁰ С. А. Плетнева. *Кочевники Средневековья. Поиски исторических закономерностей*. Москва 1982.

moneys in the form of tribute. The ultimate phase of nomad-agricultural relations may see a social synergy where elements of one or the other would prevail. The outcome of such synergy, or rather which elements would take priority, depends on the specific historical conditions. Sometimes (more often than not) the agricultural population would assimilate the nomadic “core;” in other circumstances, the nomads may cement their military and political presence and may build a lasting state that in the long run may efface the traits of the short-lived “steppe empires.” These phases may overlap in the actual historical realities. Their disentanglement is the product of historical typology, which in principle deals with “pure” societal processes and models.

The inevitable conclusion is that the Ottomans’ desire in the 1370s–1380s to surround themselves with a buffer of vassal Christian states coincided with a particular stage in the evolution of Ottoman nomadism. According to the model proposed by Pletnyova,²¹ this type of nomad-agricultural interaction is evident in the second developmental phase of nomad societies and is characteristic of the so-called “steppe empires.” We have underscored, however, that here – as well as in every other encounter between these two types of societies – the agricultural population affected by the expansion was not merely a passive player. The enforcement of Ottoman sovereignty over the majority of the Balkan kingdoms in the 1370s–1380s was made possible not only by the evolution of Ottoman society; it was also propelled by the state of the resistant Balkan societies in the last quarter of the fourteenth century. The sway of objective tendencies, redoubled by the devastating invasion, had fractioned the political structures across the Balkans. The small principalities could not fight back on their own, neither could they establish a lasting system of interrelations. Their petty bickering for power or survival offered the conquerors a perfect excuse to intervene, usually disguised as “protection” or political and military arbitration. Quite a few of the local Christian rulers willingly sought Ottoman tutelage as a way to stop the raids on their territory or simply weather the imminent political turmoil. This could explain numerous cases where the Balkan rulers declared themselves to be Ottoman vassals even before the invaders encroached on their territory. If due to various circumstances one such ruler succumbed to vassalage, sooner or later his neighbors had to follow suit or they risked to get the wrong end of the bargain. The Ottoman raids quickly turned against them, while their vassal neighbors used the opportunity to snatch territories at their expense.

²¹ Ibid. 49–52.

Such reasoning is destined to reach a paradox: the Ottomans' capability to yield supremacy over the Christian kingdoms was the result of two seemingly counteractive, but in fact supplementary factors. One was the Ottomans' looming military supremacy; the other was their incapacity to take on at once the entire Christian world in the Balkans. The former more and more gained the upper hand, while the latter increasingly lost significance, the closer we come to the end of the fourteenth century.²²

In conclusion, the phenomenon that we tried to explain in terms of historical typology – namely, the vassal dependence of the Balkan Christian kingdoms from the Ottomans in the 1370s–1380s – was the result of two interlocking developments. One was the state and the evolution of Ottoman society in terms of its nomadic characteristics; the other was the specific political situation of the Balkan states and societies after the Battle of Černomen. In the later phases of its development the Ottoman state persistently continued to create vassal Christian territories. At that point, however, it had shed all traits of nomadism and exhibited the features of a full-blown Islamic empire; in that context, vassalage had strictly military, diplomatic and political dimensions.²³ Never again was it used on such a large scale, nor was it as instrumental to the Ottoman expansion as in the late 1380s and the beginning of the 1390s.

If Christian vassalage to the Ottomans after 1370 is perceived only as a string of events, that is, a series of historical facts at a certain stage of the Ottoman expansion and Christian resistance, it may indeed be construed as an efficient Ottoman method of conquest. The vassal territories narrowed the line of offense, enabling the conquerors to concentrate their efforts in several strategic directions. By retaining local self-governance in the vassal territories, the Ottomans were spared the need to spread thin their military resources in new garrisons and to administer lands that were alien to their traditions. These considerations partly explain the large-scale Ottoman conquest in the last quarter of the fourteenth century. By contrast, some scholars have expressed the opinion that the ruthless conquest policy of Bayezid I and the elimination of the vassal Christian territories was one of the reasons for the profound crisis that swept the Ottoman Empire after the Ottomans' defeat at Ankara in 1402.

²² Матаиов, Михнева, *op. cit.*, 58–9.

²³ *Ibid.* 248–88.

BYZANTINE FORTRESSES TO THE SOUTH OF THE HEMUS MOUNTAIN IN THE LIGHT OF COIN FINDS FROM THE LAST DECADES OF THE SIXTH CENTURY

Yordanka Yurukova

In the sixth century, Byzantine territories to the south of the Danube became a target of devastating barbarian invasions which, in the words of Procopius, turned these flourishing lands into a depopulated Scythian desert.¹ In addition to the vague reports excerpted from Byzantine authors, information collected through studies of archeological records and analysis of numismatic material can be successfully employed as means to elucidate a relative chronology of the separate invasions, the direction taken by the invaders, and so on. This complex methodology provides an opportunity to contribute intriguing observations on the nature and chronology of the invasions by Slavs, Kutrigurs, and Avars, as well as on the routes of their penetration in Byzantium's Balkan possessions.² The jury is still out on many issues, however, and some speculative claims need the support of further evidence. Archeological findings (in the majority of the cases of complexes excavated in whole or in part but with results still unpublished) and systematic study of often ignored or understudied coin hoards can serve as useful correctives in such cases.

Bulgaria is the only Balkan country which, for almost eight decades and at the initiative of Nikola Mushmov, continued by Todor Gerasimov

¹ Proc. *Anecdota*, 114₁₅-115₂.

² P. Lemerle. "Invasions et migrations dans les Balkans depuis la fin de l'époque romaine jusqu'au VIII s." *Révue Historique*, 211 (1954), 265-308; Y. Yurukova. "Les invasions slaves au sud de Danube d'après les trésors monétaires en Bulgarie." *Byzantinobulgarica*, 3 (1970), 255-65; eadem. "Contribution numismatique à la définition du caractère des agglomérations du VI^e s. dans les Balkans." *Mélanges du numismatique, d'archéologie et d'histoire offerts à Jean Lafaurie*. Paris 1980, 273-80; V. Popovič. "Les témoins archéologiques des invasions avaro-slaves dans l'Illyricum byzantin." *Mefra*, 87:1 (1975), 445-504; idem. "La descente des koutrigours, des slaves et des avars vers la mer Egée: le témoignage de l'archéologie." *Académie des Inscriptions et des belles-lettres, comptes rendus des séances de l'année 1978 (juillet-octobre)*. Paris 1978, 597-648; Ў. Юркува. „Антични и ранновизантийски монети“. *Перник*, 1 (1981), 218-61.

and Yordanka Yurukova, issued a regular newsletter on annually found coin hoards. This newsletter provides concise reports on the localities, composition, and subsequent fate of about one hundred sixth-century Byzantine coin hoards found on the territory of modern Bulgaria. It was only in the late 1980s that the reports on bronze coin finds were complemented by information about their nominal value, the persons who struck them, the mint marks, and especially the years of striking. The recording of the latter provides significant chronological brackets for dating individual hoards and, hence, for connecting with specific events several hoards that were concealed upon the threat of barbarian incursions which otherwise left vague traces or were passed over in silence in the concise accounts of Byzantine authors.

In what follows, I will briefly outline the significance of the recently published comprehensive inventory of Byzantine coin hoards from the Balkan Peninsula and Asia Minor from the late fifth to the early eighth century (491–713).³ Thoroughly documented, examined with the same methodology, and dated in a comparatively accurate manner, these coin finds can be used as sources for the economic and political history of the Balkans. At the same time, from a purely practical perspective, the hoards analyzed in the inventory set benchmarks for the exploration of newly discovered and not yet identified or attributed hoards.

Created on the initiative of the undisputed authority on Byzantine studies, Paul Lemerle and Vladislav Popovich, the recently published inventory has yet to be assessed in terms of its merits and flaws. The latter include the arrangement of hoards on an administrative basis. Thus, hoards found in fortified settlements and located in immediate proximity are classified in different sections of the inventory according to the provinces in which they were minted (Thrace, the Rhodope Mountains, Dacia Mediterranea, and Macedonia). The fact that hoards of similar dating were found in the same geographic and political area suggests that they were buried in response to a common threat – in this case, a specific enemy invasion.

A case in point are a number of hoards included in the inventory that I have studied closely. All of them were found through systematic archaeological excavations and entered museum collections in their entirety. They are linked to ancient settlements whose fortifications, according to Procopius, were

³C. Morrisson, V. Popović, V. Ivanišević et al. *Les trésors monétaires byzantines des Balkans et d'Asie Mineure (491-713)* [hereafter *Trésors monétaires*]. Paris 2006.

expanded, reinforced, and restored during Justinian I's reign (527–565). It is impossible to date with precision the vast construction works undertaken to renovate the old half-destroyed fortresses and build new fortifications. It would be logical to assume, however, that this initiative, which required significant funds, took place in the first years of the rule of Justinian, when Byzantium's financial abilities were still not seriously affected by the large-scale military operations on all of the empire's frontiers.⁴ Faced with steadily mounting barbarian invasions, the most devastating among which during the first half of the sixth century were the invasions of the Slavs, Justinian responded with a massive fortification campaign. According to Procopius of Caesarea, "these innumerable fortresses" hosted significant military units.⁵ In *De Aedificiis*, he provides a punctilious account of the names of the erected or renovated fortifications in the foothills of the Hemus Mountain, as well as in Thrace and the Rhodope Mountain, which formed the second and third defense belts. Most of these names have not been identified with the numerous remains of early medieval sites or ancient towns and strongholds in the territory of modern Bulgaria.

Belovo is one of these "restored" fortifications, where signs of economic uptick could be seen as early as mid-third century and the influx of coins is evidenced also for the next two centuries. Naturally protected, nestled in the folds of the Northern Rhodopes, not far from the upper course of the Maritsa River, the Byzantine fortress near Belovo was fortified and probably reinforced under the rule of Justinian I through the construction of new fortification facilities. The four coin hoards found there (three of them during excavations and one by treasure hunters)⁶ not only confirm these observations, but also shed light upon the dramatic fate of the fortress and its inhabitants in the last quarter of the sixth century. Marked as "Belovo I," "Belovo II," and "Belovo III," the three hoards consist only of bronze coins. The synchrony between the first two hoards is complete. Their latest coins marking their *terminus post quem* were struck in 574–575. Both hoards seem to have been simultaneously concealed at the time of a threat to the settlement and its inhabitants. This probably took place in 578–579, during one of the most massive Slavic

⁴ И. Дуйчев. „Балканският югоизток през първата половина на VI в.“ *Беломорски преглед*, 1 (1942), 252.

⁵ Proc. *De aed.*, 102₂₀.

⁶ *Trésors monétaires*, 123–6.

invasions.⁷ On their way to Thessaloniki and Hellas, a wave of invaders used the road along the valley of Maritsa. While posing a threat to the fortress near Belovo, this invasion did not put an end to the fortification. The composition of the third hoard suggests that the fortified settlement, which was out of the way of the invaders, kept its significance for two more decades. Moreover, this hoard contains coins that seem to have been accumulated after the earlier crisis, when life in the fortress went back to normal. The coins missing from it are the ones from 577/578–579/580. The latest coin in that hoard, a perfectly preserved *follis* of Mauritius Tiberius, dates back to 597–598. Hence, it dates the concealment of the hoard immediately after the entry of this currency into circulation. For the time being, “Belovo III” is the latest find of bronze coins of the sixth and early seventh century discovered on the territory of modern Bulgaria. Its date coincides with the one of the hoard of five *solidi* of Mauritius Tiberius found by treasure hunters near the ruins of the Byzantine fortress in the vicinity of Belovo. The inventory designates this find as “Belovo IV.”⁸

The concealment of the “Belovo III” and “Belovo IV” hoards can be associated with the destruction of the fortress and the fading of life in it, resulting from the broken defenses of the Danube *limes* by the Avars in 595–596. The written sources provide incomplete and inconsistent information about those dramatic events, which ended with the big siege of Thessaloniki in 597.⁹ Analysis of information in the hoard inventory, the findings of the archaeological studies, and the analysis of coin finds show that, during their movement to the south to the attractive, wealthy Thessaloniki, the Avars embarked upon destroying the fortification facilities of the Byzantine settlements they had managed to penetrate. The scope of their devastations included the settlements and fortresses off the main roads as well, a fact reflected by the simultaneous concealment of a large number of hoards that seems to include the two hoards from Belovo.

Unlike Belovo, where, following the damage inflicted in the late 570s, life went back to normal at least for some decades, the settlements along the Struma River valley (on the Serdica–Thessaloniki highway) saw an earlier and more brutal destruction. If we are to look briefly at their fate as reflected

⁷ *Ibid.*, 126.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 126.

⁹ On the controversial hypotheses related to the dating of this siege, see Lemerle, *op. cit.*, 294; Popovič, “La descente des koutrigours,” 624–26 and sources cited there.

in the coin hoards, we will first focus on the fortress of Pernik.¹⁰ Naturally protected, almost impregnable, situated in a key location between the plain of Serdica/Sofia and the valley of Struma, this fortress was a crucial military and administrative centre under the rule of Justinian I and the first years of Justinian II. This is evidenced by the incessant influx of coins (mostly bronze) and the group of four *exagia* found there. Used as official weight standards for gold Byzantine coins, *exagia* are treated even today as one of the rarest coin-like tokens employed by the early Byzantine imperial administration.¹¹ The location of the fortress of Pernik near one of the most important strategic roads connecting the Danube with the plain of Serdica/Sofia and reaching the Aegean Coast via the Kresna Gorge, established the fortification's key place in the Byzantine defense system.¹² The systematic archaeological studies of a major part of the ruins of the fortified settlement near Pernik, led by Yordanka Changova, found a large number of heavily scorched coins struck by Justin II.¹³ All of them are marked with the twelfth year of his rule (576–577) and give us good reasons to associate the catastrophic fire and the devastation of the fortress and its suburbs with one of the most imposing marches of the Slavs to the Southern Balkans. According to reports by Menander Protector, in 577 about 100,000 Slavs crossed the Danube, dispersed across the Thracian lands and, heading south, devastated the province of Hellas, i.e. Macedonia and Thessaly.¹⁴ Whether the Slavs used the direct roads south, including the one connecting Naissus, Serdica, and the Struma River valley, or got across the Hemus Mountains via some Balkan passes and then, via the Philippopolis–Serdica road, headed south to Hellas, they fell on the fortress near Belovo and that of Pernik then a strategic key to the Aegean Coast, and devastated them. For the settlement near Pernik, this had catastrophic consequences: all human habitation there ceased for more than two centuries.

¹⁰ Юрукова, „Антични и ранновизантийски монети“, 218–61.

¹¹ Yurukova, “Contribution numismatique”, 273–80. A glass *exagium* of 2.07 g, a weight standard for the semis, was also found at excavations in Belovo. See, Й. Юрукова. „Нови стъклени екзагии, открити при археологически разкопки от България“. *Нумизматика и сфрагистика*, 1–4 (1994), 3–9.

¹² Lemerle, *op.cit.*, 287; Yurukova, “Les invasions slaves,” 255–65.

¹³ Юрукова, „Антични и ранновизантийски монети“, 218–61.

¹⁴ Menandre le Protecteur. *Hist. frg.*, 64–5.

Nicopolis ad Nestum, a town of ancient traditions, circulated its own coins in the late second and early third century, and preserved some of its prestige over the next three centuries. Isolated coin finds from the mid-fourth to the end of the fifth century, which, unfortunately, are not well studied or published, show that the economic and political development of the settlement during that period took place without any major cataclysms. The archaeological studies underway revealed some of the defense systems, including fortified walls and towers. Reinforced probably under Justinian I, they were ruthlessly destroyed in late 570s. The hoard found during excavations sheds new light upon the chronology of these dramatic events. The latest specimens in this hoard, which consists of 139 bronze coins, are the coins of Justin II, struck in 574–575.¹⁵ Notably, a large number of hoards found in today's Bulgarian lands have a similar *terminus post quem*.¹⁶ Furthermore, it corroborates the already discussed evidence from the same geographic and political area, i.e. "Belovo I," "Belovo II," and Sandanski, complemented with the isolated and scorched bronze coins of Justin II found near Pernik.

In addition to coin hoards, the archaeological study of these fortified settlements uncovered other finds which throw light on their characteristics: the already mentioned set of three glass *exagia*, as well as a magnificent round-shaped plate made of dark-blue glass paste and found during excavations of one of the large towers (No. 4) of the fortification system of Nicopolis ad Nestum.¹⁷ While one of its sides has smooth surface, an unusual composition is embossed on the other concave side, depicting three busts and a cross-shaped monogram. Two of the busts flank the monogram at an equal height and the third one, crowned with a halo, surmounts the other two and is poised at the centre of the composition. The central haloed bust, dominating the others, is undoubtedly the image of Christ. It seems that the two busts flanking the image of Christ depict Justin II and his wife, Empress Sophia. This interpretation and dating are corroborated by deciphering the small cross-shaped monogram, which indicates the name of ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΥ [Theodoros].¹⁸

Can we identify who that dignitary was? Almost all stamps on the silver objects of Justin II's time depict monograms transcribing the name of the same

¹⁵ *Trésors monétaires*, no. 6.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 122.

¹⁷ Юрукова, „Нови стъклени екзагии“, 4.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

comes sacrarum largitionum whose name was Theodoros.¹⁹ These stamps confirm the account of the chronicler Menander who notes that in 575–576 the functions of *comes sacrarum largitionum* were performed by a certain Theodoros.²⁰ Theophanes, in turn, confirms and expands this information by referring to a person named Theodoros, the son of Peter, with the title of *eparch*.²¹ If we are to recall that the stamps often depict the emperor's bust with a monogram of the *comes sacrarum largitionum*²² engraved below it, I believe there is sufficient evidence to treat this glass *exagium* from Nicopolis ad Nestum as an official document related to one of the highest dignitaries of Justin II's administration.

Taking into consideration the functions of *exagia* and the rarity of the glass specimens due to the fragile material, we can make a justified assumption that the specimen from Nicopolis ad Nestum constitutes a significant monument related to the past of this devastated city. Apparently, it kept its significance as a commercial and administrative centre since ancient times until the end of Justin II's rule.

A similar pattern can be observed in the ancient settlement near Sandanski where, while discovering crucial architectural facilities from Late Antiquity, archaeologists came across yet another hoard of coins. It contains 22 bronze coins, 14 of which are half *follises* struck in Thessaloniki.²³ The latest among them – a coin that can be dated between 567 and 577 – determines the date and, therefore, the likely circumstances under which the hoard was concealed.

The concealment of the Sandanski hoard indicates that this settlement, along with other ones like Pernik and Nicopolis ad Nestum, was yet another victim of the Slavic invasions of the late 570s.²⁴ Having already been established as commercial and administrative (and cultural, in the case with Sandanski)

¹⁹ E. Cruikshank Dodd. "Byzantine Silver Stamps. New Stamps from the Reigns of Justin II and Constans II." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 18 (1964), 244, tabl. V, no. 2026.

²⁰ Men., *Hist. frag.*, 45.

²¹ Theoph. *Chr.*, ed. De Boor. I: 235:4, 236:23.

²² J. P. C. Kenb. "Comes bacrarum Largi Honum." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 15 (1961), 35–45.

²³ *Trésors monétaires*, no. 94.

²⁴ L. Hauptmann. "Les rapports des Byzantins avec les Slaves et les Avars pendant la seconde moitié du VI-ème siècle." *Byzantion*, 4 (1927–1928), 137–170. John of Ephesus dated the Great Slav Invasion to 579.

centers in the ancient times, these settlements retained their character into the early Middle Ages. This is a significant characteristic that distinguishes them from the fortresses located along the *limes* and more strategically in the Danube Plain and the Hemus Mountain range, whose inhabitants were mainly troops garrisoned there. In other words, the latter were military fortifications with particular functions in the Byzantine defense system. They withstood the attacks until the late sixth century when, under the incessant pressure of the Avars, the defense of the *limes* collapsed. In the south, near the Struma River valley, the catastrophe took place almost two decades earlier. Urban life there died out, only to recover after many centuries.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE BULGARIAN STATE IN BULGARIAN MEDIEVAL HISTORIOGRAPHY

Milijana Kaimakamova

Accounts of the origins and development of early states, as recorded in chronicles and histories, are of great interest to medieval authors and medievalists alike because they involve key concepts and ideas operative in the area of political ideology.¹ The foundation of the Bulgarian state is not an exception from that rule. It attracted the attention of medieval Bulgarian writers from early on and was discussed in several historical works. Among these are the *Name List of the Bulgarian Khans* (eighth century), the *Bulgarian Chronograph* (tenth century), the *Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle* (eleventh century), and the *Brief Bulgarian Chronicle* (fourteenth century).² These early writings approached the beginnings of the Bulgarian state from a

¹ H. Grundman. *Geschichtsschreibung in Mittelalter. Gattungen-Epochen-Eigenart*. Göttingen 1965, 7–51; O. Вайнштейн. *Западноевропейская средновековая историография*. Москва–Ленинград 1964, 118–202; F. J. Schmale, H.-W. Goetz. *Funktion und Formen Mittelalterlicher Geschichtsschreibung*. Darmstadt 1985, 126, 143–164; Б. Флоря. „Представления об образовании государства и его основных функциях в русском и западно-славянском летописании“. *Studia Balcanica*, 20 (Раннефеодалные славянские государства и народности. Проблемы идеологии и культуры) (1991), 43–53; K. Norbert. *Geschichtsschreibung im Europa der „nationes“*. *Nationalgeschichtliche Gesamtdarstellungen im Mittelalter*. Köln–Weimar–Wien 1995, 5–10; H.-W. Goetz. *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbußsein im hohen Mittelalter*. Berlin 1999, 164–77.

² O. Pritsak. *Die Bulgarische Fürstenliste und die Sprache der Protobulgaren*. Wiesbaden 1955; М. Москов. *Именник на българските ханове (ново тълкуване)*. София 1988; М. Каймакамова. *Българска средновековна историопис*. София 1990, 59–65, 71–7, 124–32; eadem. „Именник на българските ханове“ – начало на българското летописание“. *Родина*, 1–2 (1997), 7–39; eadem. „Историографската стойност на „Български апокрифен летопис““. In: *Civitas Divino-Humana. В чест на професор Георги Бакалов*. София 2004, 417–41; L. Havlíková. *Byzantská historigrafie a malá bulharská kronika*. Brno 1992; Л. Горина. *Болгарский хронограф и его судьба на Руси*. София 2005; for English translations and further bibliography on some of the sources, see K. Petkov. *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria, Seventh–Fifteenth Century. The Records of a Bygone Culture*. Leiden – Boston 2008.

specifically historiographical point of view and greatly influenced the later development of the genre and the understanding and presentation of their subject matter.

Written at different times and for specific purposes, these texts provide valuable evidence for the medieval notions of the origins and the role of Bulgaria as a state as they were presented to the medieval audience by their authors. The significance of these narratives has been aptly explained by Vasil Gjuzelev, who writes: “the distinctly Bulgarian historiographical point of view does not always concur with the historical memories, the viewpoints or notions about our [i.e. Bulgarian] history left by other peoples. The historical truth scholars strive for is hidden precisely in the dynamic tension, the rebuttal, acceptance, or approximation that exist between those latter views [and the native ones].”³

A thorough examination of the medieval views of the Bulgarian past will counter misjudgments about the foundation of the Bulgarian state formed in later history writings. At the same time, the knowledge thus produced will safeguard against creating new myths and legends regarding the origins and character of the medieval Bulgarian state.⁴ This short study has two goals: (1) To determine the extent to which these sources are historically accurate or, rather, a figment of their author’s literary imagination; 2) to explore the dimensions of the medieval Bulgarian historiography, particularly that concerned with the formation of the Bulgarian state in the context of the political consolidation of the country in Southeastern Europe.

The Name List of the Bulgarian Khans

The foundation of the Bulgarian state was a subject of interest in the medieval Bulgarian historiography since its very inception, as documented in the earliest extant work in the genre, *The Name List of the Bulgarian Khans*.⁵ This brief

³ В. Гюзелев. *Апология на Средновековието*. София 2004, 77.

⁴ About the various opinions up to 1980, see: П. Ангелов. „Образуване на българската държава в съвременната българска медиевистика“. *Военноисторически сборник*, 49: 3 (1980), 71–84. About criticism in regard to research methods until 1989, see: И. Божилов. *Седем етюда по средновековна история*. София 1995, 1, 11–72; В. Гюзелев. „Въведение“. In: *История на България в три тома*. София 1999, I. И. Божилов, В. Гюзелев. *История на Средновековна България VII–XIV в.* София 1999, 6–7.

⁵ For a detailed commentary on the *Name List of the Bulgarian Khans* as the first Bulgarian

chronicle of rulers, together with the inscriptions around the Madara Horseman relief, represents the beginning of the Bulgarian historical tradition in the first half of the eighth century. The *Name List* was most likely composed around 766-767, as the last entry in it is about Khan Umor, who ruled for only forty days in 765.⁶ It was inscribed on stone, in Greek, as were many other inscriptions from the period of the Bulgarian Khanate.⁷ The language does not diminish its original and independent character, since Greek and Latin were the two languages in which historical works were written in early medieval Europe. The composition of the *Name List* coincided with the culmination of the struggle for power between the ruling *boil* clans, on the one hand, and the campaigns of the Byzantine Emperor Constantine V Copronymus (741-775) aimed at destroying Bulgaria and conquering its territory, on the other.⁸

Judging by the high level of knowledge about the names of past rulers, their clans, and their years of reign demonstrated by the author of the *Name List*, it is logical to assume that he belonged to the class of the *boils*. The fact that the traditional Bulgarian calendar was known mainly if not exclusively to the ruling elite, and was used specifically for the needs of the khan's chancellery, indicates its author's aristocratic origins. The text also suggests that he was highly educated and cultured for his time.⁹ The unknown chronicler and/or his patron were clearly influenced by political factors. In this sense, the *Name List* must have served as an important propaganda tool. It testifies to the ideological preoccupations in the Bulgarian court during that early period. Its ideological content finds parallels in Western European dynastic chronicles from the Middle Ages.

historical work dedicated to the formation of the Bulgarian state, see: Каймакамова, „Именник“, 11–44. For an English translation, see K. Petkov. *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria*, 3-5, no. 10.

⁶ И. Дуйчев. „Именникът на българските ханове“ и българската държавна традиция“. *Векове*, 1 (1973), 8; И. Божилов. „Българска средновековна историопис“. In: *Стара българска литература*, III. *Исторически съчинения*. София 1983, 17; Каймакамова, „Именник на българските ханове“, 30–3.

⁷ Дуйчев, *op. cit.*, 8–9.

⁸ For a detailed description of the events see: Божилов, Гюзелев, *История*, I, 114–20.

⁹ Каймакамова, „Именник на българските ханове“, 35–6.

They, too, were written to justify the rulers' conduct and actions, and are evidence of how power was established, challenged, and negotiated.¹⁰

I emphasize this not only because it is relevant to the subject matter, but also because these observations show that: (1) as early as the dawn of medieval Bulgaria (late seventh–early eighth centuries), the Bulgarians felt it necessary to define their own status and to consolidate their position as a political entity in relation to the other peoples and states through a written history; (2) the Bulgarian ruling elite, led by the khan, turned history writing into one of the most important propaganda tools for the legitimization of their power.

One of the most significant features of the *Name List* as a historical work is the use of genealogy as the main means of conceptualizing the foundation of the Bulgarian state. Let us examine the functions of genealogy as a form of historical memory, as this is important to explain how the author used it to create an idea about the founding of medieval Bulgaria.

Genealogy, as a combination of concepts about the family past of an individual, a clan, or an ethnos, inherent in a particular society, played an essential part in the culture and the social and political life of pre-industrial societies.¹¹ It underlies the development of historical writing during both Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Exploring the experiences of the history writers of those periods shows that to them, genealogy offered a way to structure and systematize the past and to create a clear sense of historical continuity.¹² Lists of the names of ancestors served as axes around which the stories about their deeds revolved, and as chronological networks organizing the order of events. The status of the person defined the dimensions of his or

¹⁰ E. Van Houts. "Local and regional chronicles." *Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental*, 74 (1995), 59.

¹¹ On the importance of genealogy as a socio-cultural phenomenon in pre-industrial societies, see: W. Dworzaczek. *Genealogia*. Warszawa 1959, 15; L. Génicot. *Les Généalogues*. Toumout 1975, 25; E. Frise. "Genealogie." In: *Lexikon des Mittelalters*. Munich–Zürich 1989, IV, 1216–21; D. N. Dumville. "Kingship, Genealogies and Regnal Lists." In: P. Sawyer, I. H. Wood, eds. *Early Medieval Kingship*. Leeds 1997, 72–104; E. Мельникова. „Предисловие“. In: *Древнейшие государства восточной Европы. Генеалогия как форма исторической памяти*. Москва 2004.

¹² On these functions of genealogy, see: J. Vansina. *Oral Tradition as a History*. Wisconsin 1985, 183; А. Гуревич. *Категории средневековой культуры*. Москва 1984, 88–9; Frise, *op. cit.*; Мельникова, *op. cit.*, 4.

her “genealogical history:” the genealogy of ordinary family members joined together the history of the micro-society; the genealogy of the chieftain was at the same time a history of his clan and of the tribe as a unified collective body; the history of the entire state was concentrated in the genealogy of the state ruler.¹³ These functions of genealogy determined the domination of the genealogical principle in the perception of history and historiography, and in the construction of the historical narrative right until the end of the Middle Ages.¹⁴ They are characteristic of the *Name List* as well which, in the eighth century, laid the foundation of medieval Bulgarian history writing.

What kind of sources were used to compose the *Name List*? The first two entries, which appear to be legendary, are dedicated to the forefathers of the Doulo dynasty – Avitohol and Irnik – and suggest that the chronicler relied upon oral history and the epic tradition of Asparuch’s Bulgaria and its aristocracy. In the late seventh and the eighth centuries, that tradition was a reflection of the traditional Bulgarian sense of history. Legends about the ancient ruling clan Doulo, the origins of the Bulgarians, and their migration from the Altai Mountains to Europe and later on from the territories around the Azov and the Caspian Seas to the Danube Delta must have constituted a large part of that tradition, as most likely did stories of great heroes, the deeds of rulers and other members of the aristocracy, and tales of the common political past shared by Bulgarians and Huns (in the mid-second to the mid-fifth centuries). Traces of that early Bulgarian oral epos can also be found in the *Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle* (second half of the eleventh century), and are corroborated in the writings of the Byzantine historians Procopius of Caesarea and Agathias of Myrina.¹⁵ It should be pointed out that in the period from the sixth to the eighth centuries, similar ethno-genetic legends explaining the origin of peoples (*origo gentis*) were widespread among the Franks, the Visigoths, and the Langobards. Ethnic, political, and religious consciousness were not yet differentiated and merged in the epic mind.¹⁶ Even

¹³ Мельникова, *op. cit.*, 5.

¹⁴ F. Ingledew. “The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia regum Britanniae*.” *Speculum*, 69: 4 (1964), 665–8; J. M. Moeglin. “Dynastisches Bewußtsein und Geschichtsschreibung. Zum Selbstverständnis der Wittelsbacher, Habsburger und Hohenzollern im Spätmittelalter.” *Historische Zeitschrift*, 256 (1993), 593–635; Мельникова, *op. cit.*, 6.

¹⁵ Каймакамова, *Българска средновековна историопис*, 33–5.

¹⁶ В. Ронин. „Франки, вестготи, лангобарди в VI–VIII века: политические аспекты

when the medieval peoples outgrew that stage of their cultural development, the ideological functions of the legends motivated the chroniclers in early and high medieval Europe to include them in their writings, as they provided historical arguments for substantiating the legal rights of the ruling dynasties.¹⁷ The Bulgarian chronicler was guided by similar considerations. He made use of the information presented in the clan legends about the Bulgarian leaders and khans that originated during the Great Migration of Peoples, turning them to accounts that accorded with his political goals and agenda.

The compiler of the *Name List of the Bulgarian Khans* formed his historical concept based on the notions of his contemporaries about the origins and the nature of the state, which they understood to have been established in 680 around the lower course of the Danube. His work testifies to seventh-century Bulgarians' interest in their historical past, preserved in the oral epos and legends. The unique contribution of Asparuch's Bulgarians was preserving these legends in writing. The author of the *Name List* included the knowledge contained in the oral tradition as part of the official Bulgarian recorded history of the eighth century by recording in writing the first genealogical chronicle that contained historically authentic information. The high value of that kind of information has been repeatedly emphasized in Western European historiography as well, even though its written tradition is incomparably richer than that of the Bulgarians.¹⁸

The information in the *Name List* suggests that before composing his chronicle, the author had carried out some preliminary "research" activities. At the very least, he must have processed and carefully considered the information from the historical epos with an eye to presenting it in a more generalized form; calculated the year when each ruler ascended to power and the length of his rule; and arranged in chronological order the data obtained

самосознания". In: *Одисей. Человек в истории. Исследования по социальной истории и истории культуры*. Москва 1989, 60–76.

¹⁷ S. Wagner. *Die Stammtafel des Menschengeschichtes*. Saarbrücken 1947; H. Wolfram. "Origo et religio. Ethnic Traditions and Literature in Early Medieval Texts." *Early Medieval Europe*, 3: 1 (1994), 34–8; Van Houts, *op. cit.*, 17; К. Зубер. „От Священной истории к наглядному изображению генеалогий в X–XIII веках.“ In: *Одисей. Человек в истории. Слово и образ в средневековой культуры*. Москва 2002, 200–17; В. Антонов. „Становление генеалогической мысли в Дании“. In: *Древнейшие государства восточной Европы*, 7–37.

¹⁸ Van Houts, *op. cit.*, 17.

from the legends and from his personal observations as a witness to some of the events from the first half of the eighth century. His work with sources, as well as his skill in using the Bulgarian calendar, is indicative of the historical culture of the chronicler. His method transpires in the methodical presentation of the rulers that includes the name of the ruler, the clan he descended from, the total number of years of his reign, and the year when he assumed supreme power.¹⁹ The erudition of the chronicler can also be discerned in the use of various verb forms (“lived,” “being,” “ruled”), nouns (“deputy”), and phrases (“power was given to him,” “held the princely power,” “the same so far,” “and this one instead of another”). These formulaic expressions strengthen the rhythm of the chronological data measuring the reigns of the rulers, and hint at certain characteristics inherent to rulers that led to their assumption of power. The author presents the formation of the Bulgarian state not as a single event or act, but as a long process, whose different, organically connected periods were bound together by the genealogy of the rulers.²⁰

As an exponent of the medieval understanding of statehood, the author of the *Name List* perceives the concepts of people, territory, and power (which, according to modern scholarship, are the three constitutive elements of the state and are preliminary links in the process of its formation) as an organic whole.²¹ It is clear in the text that the author believed that the ruler – who personified the state and the people – was the most important link in the state’s functioning as a complete entity.²² Of course, then as now, power structure was the most important element of the state. Other elements, such as territory and people, do not necessarily presuppose a state since they can as social organizations be distinct from the state.²³ We should therefore accept in this context that the chronicler had a definite concept of state power as an established order in which some people are subordinate to others.²⁴ A close view demonstrates that listing the Bulgarian khans in a chronological sequence the chronicler traced the evolution of the ruler’s power into state

¹⁹ Каймакамова, „Именник на българските ханове”, 28.

²⁰ Каймакамова, *op. cit.*, 13–4.

²¹ Л. Владикин. „Курс по общодържавно право, 1. Общо учение за държавата.“ *Университетска библиотека*, 156 (1935), 190–2, 326–9.

²² Каймакамова, *op. cit.*, 14–8.

²³ Владикин, *op. cit.*, 326.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

power. His main goal was to reveal the nature of the latter, proceeding from the premise of the close connection between the ruler and the state.

The first rulers in the *Name List* are Avitohol and Irnik, who, to the author's mind, were also the forefathers of the Bulgarian Doulo dynasty. It is to them that he dedicates the introductory part of the chronicle. "Avitohol lived for 300 years. His clan [was] Doulo, and power [was] given [to] him [in] *dilom tvirem* [snake-year, the ninth month]; Irnik lived for 150 years. His clan [was] Doulo, and power [was] given [to] him [in] *dilom tvirem* [snake-year, the ninth month]." In modern works, Avitohol ("son of the ancestors")²⁵ and Irnik are identified as the ruler of the Huns from the first half of the fifth century, Attila, and his son, Ernach.²⁶ Comparative analysis of the first two entries in the chronicle with other written sources shows that they contain in encoded form the early history of the Bulgarians. In particular, the chronicler emphasizes two important periods related to the origins and development of the power of the ruler among the Bulgarians. These periods are differentiated through the eponymous names of the rulers themselves.²⁷ In support of this interpretation, there is the word „жѣтъ” in the sense of “exist during the centuries,”²⁸ used by the author only in these first entries in the chronicle. Furthermore, in the following entries, the numbers showing the duration of the rulers' reigns are historically accurate. Scholars have related the reigns of the first rulers to various events in the common political reality of the Huns and the Bulgarians that took place during the Great Migration.²⁹ The eponym “Avitohol” (who ruled, according to the *Name List*, 153-453 AD) covers the period when the Bulgarians developed as an independent people, acquired

²⁵ Some researchers are of the opinion that the mighty Hun ruler was known among his subjects, some of who were the Bulgarians, under the name of Avitohol. See Москов, *op. cit.*, 150–2. According to Ivan Venedikov, the name “Attila,” found in Latin sources in the sense of “father”, is a diminutive of Avitohol. Cf. И. Венедиков. *Медното гумно на прабългарите*. София 1983, 13–4.

²⁶ A particularly important piece of evidence for this identification is the year *dilom* (snake) given in the first two entries in the chronicle, which coincides with 453 CE in the Gregorian calendar. Cf. Pritsak, *op. cit.*, 35–6. For a review of the various opinions about the identification of Avitohol and Irnik, see: Москов, *op. cit.*, 148–56; 172–5.

²⁷ Pritsak, *op. cit.*, 35–63; Москов, *op. cit.*, 160–4; Каймакамова, „Именник на българските ханове“, 18–24.

²⁸ Москов, *op. cit.*, 156–7.

²⁹ Pritsak, *op. cit.*, 35–6; Гюзелев, *op. cit.*, 27–112; Москов, *op. cit.*, 144–6.

territory in the region around the Azov and the Caspian Seas, ruling dynasties appeared, and the power of the military leaders became hereditary. The eponym “Irnik” (who ruled, according to the *Name List*, 453–603 AD) covers the rest of Bulgarian history before the state formation³⁰ as outlined in modern historiography.³¹ These first entries in the *Name List* reflect the considerable participation of Bulgarians in the history of the Hunnic state through the second half of the fifth century. The first entry recalls the date of Attila’s death in 453; the second records the settlement of part of the Pannonian Bulgarians in Scythia Minor under Attila’s son, Ernach.³²

The entries about the first Bulgarian rulers in the *Name List* become even more important from the point of view of genealogy. With the entries stating that “Avitohol lived 300 years,” and “Irnik lived 150 years” the author indicates how far back in time the roots of the Doulo dynasty went. All together, these numbers date the roots of the Doulo dynasty to the middle of the second century CE (453 minus 300 years of life is 153).³³ Intriguingly, Chinese sources provide information about the existence of a clan called Doulo in the Mongolian Altai sometime between the first and the seventh

³⁰ Каймакамова, „Именник на българските ханове”, 23–4. On the development of the Bulgarians in their pre-state period see В. Гюзелев. „Произход и ранна история на прабългарите“. In: *Лекции за следдипломна квалификация на учителите*. София 1979, I, 30–9; С. Плетнёва. *Кочевници Средновековья*. Москва 1982, 21–2.

³¹ Cf. Гюзелев, „Произход и ранна история“, 30–9; Каймакамова, „Именник на българските ханове“, 14–7; И. Илиев. „Едноличната власт в езическа България.“ *Исторически преглед*, 1–2 (2002), 5–6.

³² About these events see В. Бешевлиев. *Първобългари*. София 1984, 9–22; Божилов, Гюзелев, *op. cit.*, 62–6.

³³ In this regard, the genealogy of the Bulgarian rulers in the “Name List of the Bulgarian Khans” differs from some of the best known Western genealogies, e.g., those of the Langobard kings included in the Edict of King Rothari (636–652) from 643 and the Anglo-Saxon King Alfred the Great (871–899). The Bulgarian genealogical tree has deeper roots than the one of the Langobard kings, the latter reaching back to the beginning of the fifth century, although, in the ancient authors, there is information about the Langobards from the first century BCE on. While the Bulgarian author traces back the roots of the Doulo dynasty to actual forefathers, such as Avitohol and Irnik, the author of the genealogy of King Alfred the Great connects the family tree of the Anglo-Saxon kings with the Germanic god Odin. These peculiarities of the two Western genealogies are explained by the scarcity of data in the sources, oral and written, that did not allow their authors to be more precise. Cf. Dumville, *op. cit.*, 17–104; A. Scharer. “The writing of history at King Alfred’s court.” *Early Medieval Europe*. 5: 2 (1996), 177–206; Антонов, *op. cit.*, 15–7.

centuries.³⁴ It appears that the author's chronology both reflects the centuries-long existence of a ruling dynasty and legitimizes the power of the Bulgarian rulers, and thus defends the legitimate existence of Danube Bulgaria as well.

These observations give reason to make the following conclusions:

- 1) With the introductory part of the *Name List of the Bulgarian Khans*, dedicated to the forefathers of the Bulgarian Doulo dynasty, the author turns the early history of the Bulgarians into an integral part of the history of the Bulgarian state.
- 2) Declaring Attila and Ernach the forefathers of the Bulgarian khans is not a figment of the author's imagination, but is based on historically correct information about the common past of the Huns and the Bulgarians obtained from the Bulgarian oral epos, and is corroborated by foreign sources.
- 3) The presentation of the Bulgarian rulers as descendants of the mighty Hun ruler allows the author to claim the historical position of the Bulgarians as a conquering people and to legitimize their power over the conquered lands around the Danube and their inhabitants. Here again it is necessary to point out that during the seventh and eighth centuries, and later as well, Western chroniclers (some of whom were often also clerics – Cassiodorus Senator, Gregory of Tours, Beda Venerabilis, Isidore of Seville, etc.), perpetuated in their narratives about the peoples of the West certain ideas about their own origins by declaring themselves the descendants of the Romans and the Macedonians and various biblical characters.³⁵ We should emphasize the fact that while the legends of Roman origins of the Western nations had literary models and were spread among communities in close touch with ancient cultures,³⁶ the narrative of the eighth-century Bulgarian chronicler came from his own pagan cultural tradition.

³⁴ About the clan Doulo/Du-lu (the clan of the “war horses”) and its connections to the Old Bulgarians in the period between the second and the fifth centuries cf.: Б. Симеонов. „Произхождение и значение исторического родового имени Дуло“. *Palaeobulgarica*, 3:1 (1979), 85–7; idem. „Произход и значение на основните прабългарски родови имена“. *Векове*, 2 (1980), 5–12.

³⁵ Cf. Ронин, *op. cit.*, 63.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

- 4) The phrase “power [was] given [to] him”³⁷ emphasizes the role of monocratic power as a very important characteristic of the Bulgarian state and political organization. Its hereditary character is highlighted by accentuating Avitohol’s and Irnik’s belonging to the same clan, Doulo.

The author continues to develop his thesis about the evolution of state power in the entries about the next two Bulgarian rulers, Gostun and Kurt. The first entry reads, “Gostun, being a deputy, [ruled] in place of another for two years. His clan [was] Ermi, and power [was] given to him [in] *dilom tvirem* [pig-year, ninth month].” In modern studies, Gostun is identified with Khan Koubrat’s uncle, known from Byzantine sources as Organa.³⁸ The new element here is the emphasis on the fact that Gostun was a “deputy” ruler of the Bulgarians. According to the sources, Gostun exercised the functions of deputy during the time when the Bulgarian tribes were under the domination of the Western Turkic Khaganate in the late sixth or early seventh century, and with his help the Bulgarians began their struggle for independence.³⁹ Therefore, the main reason for including Gostun in the *Name List* is the fact that during his leadership auspicious conditions arose among the Bulgarians for the emergence of independent rule.

The founder of “Old Great Bulgaria,” Khan Koubrat, is the subject of the fourth entry. He is mentioned under the name “Kurt,” about whom it is said: “Kurt ruled sixty years. His clan [was] Doulo, and power [was] given to him [in] *shigor vechem* [ox-year, third month].” Here, the use here of the verb “rule” is indicative of an already qualitatively new state of the power of the ruler, indicating independence. Associating independence with Kurt/Koubrat proves that the chronicler understood the evolution of power among the Bulgarians as passing through certain stages before turning into state power.⁴⁰ The analysis suggests that the author of the *Name List* was well informed about Koubrat’s life and deeds. Other sources confirm that he succeeded in uniting under his

³⁷ Meaning of the phrase cf.: Ст. Стоянов. „Към четенето и тълкуването на някои места в „Именника на българските ханове“. *Език и литература*, 4 (1971), 22.

³⁸ Pritsak, *op. cit.*, 41–2.

³⁹ Cf.: Москов, *op. cit.*, 176–80; Божилов, Гюзелев, *op. cit.*, 76.

⁴⁰ Каймакамова, „Именник на българските ханове“, 25–6.

power the Bulgarians and their kindred tribes, and found his own Khanate that was rather numerous in population and large in territory.⁴¹

The high value of the *Name List* as a source for the founding of medieval Bulgaria is convincingly revealed in the sixth entry, which seems rather descriptive and detailed in comparison to the rest. It says “These five princes ruled [held the power] on the other side of the river Danube [for] 515 years with shaved heads. After that, Prince Isperih came over to this side of the Danube. It [remains] the same until this day.” In a succinct way, the text offers a substantial amount of information. By placing the first five rulers mentioned in the chronicle (Avitohol, Irnik, Gostun, Koubrat, and Bezmer⁴²) in the same category, the chronicler binds together the periods through which the development of the khan’s power passed in order to become independent and to be consolidated on the principle of hereditary succession to the throne.⁴³ By giving the total number of years (515) of their rule in the lands “on the other side of the Danube,” he confirms the ancient roots of the Doulo clan. With this, he presents a new historical argument in support of the ancient origin of the Bulgarian state founded by Khan Asparuch in the territories around the lower reaches of the Danube river. The author leads his audience to this conclusion by examining the foundation of the state on the basis of the genealogy of its rulers; his chronology is an expression of his genealogical approach to power and statehood.

The chronicle gives a generalized idea about the scope of the territory over which the five rulers exercised their power in the course of 515 years. These were, according to the author, the lands “on the other side of the Danube.” The founding of the Bulgarian state is associated specifically with the process of absorption of a particular territory. In a broader sense, the quoted phrase could be perceived as an indication of the territory of Koubrat’s Bulgaria (the lands around the river Kuban and the Azov Sea, and the Don-Donetsk region). The explicit mentioning of the Danube, however, makes such a localization less probable. Hence it is more plausible to associate the territory “on the

⁴¹ On the events accompanying the foundation of the Old Great Bulgaria, see: Божилов, Гюзелев, *op. cit.*, 74–82.

⁴² In the “Name List of the Bulgarian Khans,” he is placed right after Kurt: “Bezmer [ruled] three years. His clan [was] Doulo, and power [was] given to him [in] *shegor vechem* [ox year, third month].”

⁴³ Каймакамова, „Именник на българските ханове“, 26.

other side of the Danube” with the Onglos, where Khan Asparuch settled with his people in the late 660s and the early 670s, escaping the attacks of the Khazars. According to Theophanes Confessor and Patriarch Nicephorus, that region lay roughly between the Dniester and the Danube. It is supposed to have been an area situated among the Seret, the Prut, and the Danube rivers.⁴⁴

In support of this point of view is the fact that the phrase “on the other side of the Danube” is directly connected to the information about Asparuch’s crossing over to “this side of the Danube.” Mentioning the Danube serves not only as a geographical reference point in regard to the territorial scope of Asparuch’s Bulgaria; it also allows the author to emphasize that this river had stopped being Byzantium’s border and had become part of the Bulgarian state.⁴⁵ All this provides reasons to define the portion of the chronicle discussed here as an *excursus* with which the author tries to delineate the territory of Asparuch’s Bulgaria. If so, it shows a certain similarity to the information in contemporary foreign sources. According to Anania Shirakatsi’s *Armenian Geography* from the seventh century, Theophanes Confessor’s *Chronographia*, and Patriarch Nicephorus *Short History* from the beginning of the ninth century, after Khan Koubrat’s death in ca. 665, Asparuch initially settled down with his people to the north of the Danube, fleeing from the Khazars, and then, after defeating the Byzantines at the Onglos in the late summer of 680, he crossed over to the southern side of the Danube.⁴⁶ Therefore, by stressing the fact that Isperih-Asparuch crossed over to “this side of the Danube,” the emphasis is, on the one hand, on the continuity between the first five rulers from the Doulo dynasty and Khan Asparuch, and, on the other, on the continuity between the state founded by him in the lands around the Danube and Koubrat’s Bulgaria. The lands around the Danube River became the birth place of the new Bulgarian state.

This portion of the *Name List* suggests that the historical memory of the chronicler defines the region around the Danube as having been dominated by Bulgarian rulers since ancient times, even before Khan Asparuch settled

⁴⁴ Божилов, Гюзелев, *op. cit.*, 86.

⁴⁵ Cf.: Каймакамова, „Именник на българските ханове“, 26–9; Д. Польшванный. *Культурное своеобразие средневековой Болгарии в контексте византийско-славянской общности IX–XV веков*. Иваново 2000, 24–5.

⁴⁶ Cf. П. Петров, В. Гюзелев. *Хрестоматия по история на България, I. Ранно средновековие XII–XIII в.* София 1978, 78, 84–6.

down there. Byzantine authors, such as Priskus and Michael the Syrian, among others, mention the names of some of them, like Attila (after 447), his son Ernach (after 453), and the chieftain Bulgar (between 582 and 602).⁴⁷ On the basis of everything said so far, one can surmise that the *Name List* substantiates the legitimate rights of the Bulgarians to the conquered territory around the Danube River. The text also demonstrates that in the eighth century, during the author's lifetime, the Bulgarians associated themselves and their state with the territory around the Danube, north and south. One should not forget the fact that the Bulgarians, with Khan Asparuch at the head, took the lands around the Danube from Byzantium⁴⁸ and for that reason it was important to demonstrate that Bulgaria on the Danube existed outside of and independently from the Eastern Empire. This is one more argument in favor of the assumption that the *Name List* envisages the territory of Asparuch's rather than that Koubrat's Bulgaria. This "territorialization" observed in the Bulgarian self-consciousness is characteristic of other early medieval communities in Europe, such as the Franks, Visigoths, and Langobards.⁴⁹ It is considered a decisive stage in the political development of tribal peoples to communities of higher taxonomic order.⁵⁰ The *Name List* delineates the territory over which Khan Asparuch established his supreme power, i.e., imposed common legal order, and laid the foundations of medieval Bulgaria.

All this shows that by its design, this portion of the *Name List* carries the strongest ideological impact, hence its key significance in the entire chronicle. The formative phase of the Bulgarian state became the axis around which the rest of the chronicle is oriented. Here the author fully develops the concept that the formation of the Bulgarian state was a long process. Seen as a whole, this portion of the chronicle addresses the essential question about the origins and character of medieval Bulgaria in the sense of power, people, and territory.

I shall complete my analysis of the *Name List of the Bulgarian Khans* as a source for the formation of the Bulgarian state with several conclusions:

- 1) With the *Name List* the author enforced the dynastic idea and

⁴⁷ Cf. Каймакамова, „Именник на българските ханове“, 27–8.

⁴⁸ Божилов, *Седем етода*, 34.

⁴⁹ Ронин, *op. cit.*, 69.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

transformed the Bulgarians into a historical people.

- 2) Using brief facts and large numbers, he created a clear and easily grasped idea about the ancient origins of the Bulgarian state tradition and its continuity in time.
- 3) To his credit, the author turns historical tradition into an asset to state power and its political claims. His chronicle presented strong arguments in the struggle of the Bulgarians against Byzantium, stressing the legitimacy of the Bulgarian state in opposition to Byzantine universalism. The important historical arguments of the *Name List* raise the Bulgarian state and its ruler as equipollent to Byzantium, as opposed to the attempts of Constantinople to present them as “*foederati*” or as a “barbarian” appendage to the empire.⁵¹
- 4) This first historical work of medieval Bulgaria clearly incorporates the historical concept about the character and essence of the Bulgarian state as based on the monarchic principle. This concept was further developed in historical works written after the Christianization of the Bulgarians by Prince Boris I (852–889).

The Bulgarian Chronograph

The fundamental significance of the *Name List of the Bulgarian Khans* as a historical work determined Tsar Symeon’s (893–927) interest in it. During the tsar’s lifetime, and probably on his request, it was translated into Old Bulgarian in order to be included in an extensive Bulgarian chronograph, traces of which are found in Russian transcripts of the *Hellenic and Roman Chronicler I* and the *Archivski Chronograph*.⁵² In it, the *Name List* is placed after the *Fourth Book of Kings*, which infuses concrete Bulgarian material into world history. This is one of the main achievements of the compiler of

⁵¹ В. Тъпкова-Займова. „Владетелска идеология на Балканах.“ *Studia Balkanica*, 20. (Раннефеодальные славянские государства и народности. Проблемы, идеологии и культуры). София 1991, 10–3; Г. Бакалов. „Византийският културен модел в идейно-политическата структура на първата българска държава“. *История*, 4/5 (1994), 15–18.

⁵² Л. Горина. „Византийская и славянская хронография (Существовал ли болгарский хронограф?)“. *Византия. Средиземноморье. Славянский мир*. Москва 1991, 27–90; eadem. „Проблемы „Именника болгарских ханов“ как части Еллинского летописца“. *Bulgarian Historical Review*, 1 (1995), 10–29.

the chronograph because in this way the idea about the ancient origins of the Bulgarian state, successfully developed in the *Name List*, is revived and given a new meaning in the spirit of autocracy, i.e., it is universalized. The decision of the compiler manifests the aspiration to preserve and increase the strength of the historical tradition as a strong argument for the legitimacy of the Bulgarian state.⁵³ By placing the genealogy of the Bulgarian rulers after the *Fourth Book of Kings*, the former are presented as descendants of the biblical kings. One can assume that this approach was used to define the standing of the Bulgarian state in space and time on a global scale. Given that the *Fourth Book of Kings* ends with the story of the siege and capture of Jerusalem by the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, a parallel is apparently sought with Symeon's claim to the title of tsar and to establishing a Bulgarian-Byzantine Empire. Furthermore, that part of the Bible promotes the idea that kings ascend and peoples prosper when they do good before the eyes of God, and that kings perish and kingdoms collapse when they drift away from God.⁵⁴ Such biblical parallels are rather typical of the Old Bulgarian literature from the times of Tsar Symeon.⁵⁵ Therefore, the positioning of the *Name List* in the Old Testament expresses the idea that the Bulgarians are a royal nation. This idea, too, is advanced in other works of the official literature from the time of Symeon.

The Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle

The theory about the origins and nature of the Bulgarian state presented in the *Name List* and further developed in the *Bulgarian Chronograph* on the basis of the Biblical idea of history is elaborated in the *Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle*.⁵⁶ This is the most authoritative work of Bulgarian historiography

⁵³ М. Каймакамова. „Българската хронография от края на IX- XIV в. (Възникване, развитие и значение)“. In: *Общото и специфичното в балканските култури до края на XIX в. Сборник в чест на 70-годишнината на проф. В. Тъпкова-Заимова*. София 1977, 200–1; А. Николов. *Политическа мисъл в ранносредновековна България (средата на IX – края на X в.)*. София 2006, 161–2.

⁵⁴ Cf.: Неврокопски митрополит Пимен. *За библията*. София 1988, 22–3; Николов, *op. cit.*, 160–4.

⁵⁵ Полывянный, *op. cit.*, 62–3.

⁵⁶ For edition of the *Chronicle*, see Й. Иванов. *Богомилски книги и легенди*. София 1925 (1970), 289–87. For an English translation, see Petkov. *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria*, 194–199, no. 114. For studies, see М. Каймакамова. *Българска средновековна истори-*

from the time of the Byzantine rule over the Bulgarian lands (eleventh –twelfth centuries). The *Chronicle* was most likely written in the second half of the eleventh century (around the 1070s) in one of the monasteries around Sredets or Velbužd. The unknown author recreates the history of the First Bulgarian Empire from the seventh to the mid-eleventh centuries in the form of a tale told according to the will of God by the prophet Isaiah. The work appears founded on oral folk legends popular among the Bulgarians in the first half of the eleventh century. Judging by the text of the *Chronicle*, the legends show a definite ideological similarity to the *Name List*. There is further similarity in some of the entries, as for instance those related to Ispor. That said, the text shows traces of Bulgarian and Byzantine popular literature of the time. The idea of the author to reveal the providential mission of the Bulgarian Kingdom stands out particularly well.⁵⁷ With that end in view, he presents its history as an important component of the history of Rome that, according to Prophet Daniel’s account, was the fourth and last kingdom on earth before the coming of the “Kingdom of God.” This understanding of world history gave rise to the idea of the “Eternal Rome” that symbolized the intransient significance of the state.

The account of the founding of the Bulgarian state starts with the inclusion of the Bulgarian Kingdom into the scheme of world history. The chronicler does this in a remarkable way. He reveals God’s will, which the prophet Isaiah must fulfill as early as in the first record: “Isaiah, my beloved prophet, go West, up there to the most far-away parts of Rome, take one third of the Cumans, who are called Bulgars, and populate the Land of Karvuna, which Romans and Hellenes left empty.”⁵⁸

Clearly, the strong ideological drift of the text leads the author to make the Bulgarians the “chosen people” by identifying them with the ancient Israelites. The emphasis in our comments here will be on the qualities of the chronicler as a historian of his people.

The passage quoted shows not only the author’s leaning to divine historiosophy, but also to discovering in Hebrew history a model for developing

опис. София 1990 и В. Тъпкова-Заимова, А. Милтенова. *Историко-апокалиптичната книжнина във Византия и средновековна България*. София 1996.

⁵⁷ Каймакамова, „Историографската стойност“, 427–8.

⁵⁸ В. Тъпкова-Заимова, А. Милтенова. *Историко-апокалиптичната книжнина*, 199.

his idea of the Bulgarian past. In place of Israel another territory is found, where according to God's will the Prophet Isaiah is to settle the Bulgarians.⁵⁹ Without manifesting it openly, the Bulgarian man of letters turns the Old Jerusalem into an example to follow. By the allusion to the Bible in the first entry, certain characteristics of this starting model, including messianism, are transferred to the Land of Karvuna, which had become the cradle of the Bulgarian state. This can be seen in the next two entries, dedicated to the fulfillment of God's will by the Prophet Isaiah, who settled the Bulgarians there and chose the "first king from [among] them," Tsar Slav. Following the author's logic in announcing Prophet Isaiah's mission to go "West, up there to the most far-away parts of Rome," and to "take one third of the Cumans, who are called Bulgars," the latter are presented as inhabitants of Rome, which does not refer to the "New Rome," or Constantinople, as some scholars have assumed, but with the Roman Empire⁶⁰.

The first entry, therefore, introduces a new way of universalizing Bulgarian history. Through it, the author strengthens the notion that the "Land of Karvuna" had been in existence since Antiquity. He follows up even more convincingly by emphasizing in the next entry that the "Land of Karvuna" had been "deserted by the Hellenes 130 years ago." Again, an allusion is made that this land is the "Promised Land" of the Bulgarians. The combination of the Christian Orthodox consciousness with the national sentiment gives rise to the idea that the Bulgarians are, like the Greeks, successors to the "Roman" and "Hellenic" heritage in the Christian cultural tradition. By using historical

⁵⁹ An even more expressive instance of this kind is found in the Russian work "Pisanie o prestavlenii i pogrebenii kniazia Skopina-Shuiskogo", compiled around 1612. In it, the "Christian people of the Moscow state" is called the "new Israil" (Алексеев 2002, 454, footnote 45).

⁶⁰ И. Дуйчев. *Българско средновековие*. София 1972, 125; В. Бешевлиев. „Началото на българската държава според апокрифен летопис“. – *Средновековна България и Черноморието. Сборник доклади от научна конференция*. Варна 1980, 39-45. Vasilka Tapkova-Zaimova shares the opinion that by "Rome" we should understand "the Roman Empire" despite the fact that in that author's opinion "there is no logic in placing the Bulgarians to the north or west from Rome, unless we take into consideration that the barbarian peoples usually attacked the Roman Empire from the west" (Тъпкова-Займова, Милтенова, *op. cit.*, 53). Todor Mollov is of the opinion that the text expresses the idea of the city of Rome as a mythopoetical cosmological center (Т. Моллов. *Мит – епос – история. Старобългарските историко-апокалиптични сказания (992 – 1092 – 1492)*. Велико Търново 1997, 32–3).

retrospection, the author probably wanted to indicate the sameness of the confessional affiliation of the Bulgarians and the Greeks of his time.⁶¹

The origin of the Bulgarians is definitely of importance to the author. At the outset, he defines them as the "third part of the Cumans." By presenting the Bulgarians in this way, the author tries to locate more precisely the territories they inhabited in the remote past, before settling in the "Land of Karvuna." His audience must have inferred that this was the territory that at the time was inhabited by the Cumans, well-known in Bulgaria and in Southeastern Europe. Viewed in the context of the overall ideological content, the entry about the Bulgarians' descent from the Cumans attains great importance. It stresses the non-Slavic origins of the Old Bulgarians. A similar tendency is noticeable also in other Slavic and Western chroniclers who wrote around the same time as our author. A typical case are the chronicles of Ekkehard and Zigebert, the *Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja*, Nestor's *Chronicle*, the *Russian Tale of Bygone Years*, etc. Comparison between them allows us to assume that the entry in the Bulgarian chronicle was based of information gained from oral legends or from translated Byzantine chronicles. What is important in this case is the fact that the compiler is in harmony with his contemporary authors who also differentiate the Bulgarians from the Slavs when writing about the early history of the Bulgarian state.

It is apparent from the text that the image of the pagan Old Bulgarians is painted in gloomy shades. Through the analogy to the Cumans, the author wanted to create an idea about their character and role in early history that his audience would easily grasp, hence including their "godlessness." To him, evidently, there was no clearer example than the Cumans. They became a kind of standard, a criterion in his assessment of the Old Bulgarians, who had a reputation for being a warlike people.⁶² By assimilating them to the Cumans, the author most likely tried to show the awe that rulers and peoples felt before the one-time mighty Bulgarians. In the times of Byzantine rule, this was a suitable way to stir up the political consciousness of the Bulgarians and to strengthen their awareness of their independent historical fate. By

⁶¹ D. Poliviani is of the opinion that through the use of "Hellenes" in the text, who left empty the Land of Karvuna, the "Cumans-Bulgarians" are identified with the Greeks in their common pagan past. See Д. Пoлывянный, *op. cit.*, 118.

⁶² Каймакамова, „Историографската стойност”, 428–9.

using this peculiar “illustration” of the early Bulgarian history, the author makes the connection between the Bulgarians’ past and present. By means of this connection, he presents in a historically authoritative way in which the events related to the foundation of the Bulgarian state.

The essential question in the first part of the narrative is until what time the Bulgarians were pagans. The author seeks the answer to this question in their attitude towards the “Greek kingdom,” i.e. Byzantium. Towards the end of his examination of the pagan period of Bulgarian history, the author makes the following summary: “After Tsar Ispor’s death, the Bulgarian Tsar, the Cumans called themselves Bulgarians, and earlier [at the time of] Tsar Ispor (i.e. Khan Asparuch, 680–701 – *M. K.*) [they] were pagans and real unbelievers, and lived in great dishonor, and were always enemies of the Greek kingdom for many years.”⁶³ To the author, the “Greek kingdom” is a symbol of Christianity. From a historiographical point of view, this entry may be characterized as an attempt by the author to do a brief characterization of the pagan period of the history of the Bulgarian Kingdom through his assessment of the Bulgarians.

The chronicler presents the Bulgarian history by following the rulers’ reigns and traces over time the process of the founding, development, and consolidation of early medieval Bulgaria as an Orthodox power. In his view, the ruler personifies the state, the people, and the territory. The subjects of his description and assessment are the building, religious, and social-political actions of the tsars who, ascended the Bulgarian throne one after another. Another characteristic feature of the structure of the narrative is the standard outline used to present the rulers. There are three main elements, namely the tsars’ deeds, their genealogies, and their years of reigning. The analysis below will follow the same sequence.

Each ruler’s deeds are systematized in such a way as to show the most essential qualities by virtue of which he personifies state power. The attitude towards the ruler is based on a set of criteria, the most important among them being: (1) his internal policy, shown through the treatment of the people, the taxes he gathers “from his land and his people,” as well as whether there is an “abundance of everything”; (2) his foreign policy, aimed at the preservation of the Bulgarian Kingdom in the struggle against the “unbelievers” and the

⁶³ Тъпкова-Заимова, Милтенова, *op. cit.*, 200.

“lawless.” The author aims to create a generalized idea about the combination of virtues needed to sustain state power. It is precisely these virtues of the ruler that the author makes the focus of his narrative.⁶⁴

Among the supreme virtues the author includes the peacemaking role of the tsar. The idea is emphasized already in the first entry in the chronicle, dedicated to the founding of the Bulgarian state. The entry states that following God’s will, the Prophet Isaiah populated the “Land of Karvuna” with a “multitude of people,” and chose the first “tsar from [among] them,” Tsar Slav, who “populated provinces and towns.”⁶⁵ The second ruler, Tsar Ispor, “... populated the whole “Land of Karvuna” where the Ethiopians (i. e., the Greeks – *M. K.*) dwelled before.”⁶⁶

The author of the chronicle attaches particular importance to building activities as an example of a ruler’s virtue. There is reason to believe that he aligned the construction activities of the rulers with the biblical tradition. In the *First Book of Kings*, where the history of the Hebrew people under the reign of King Solomon is described, Solomon gave twenty towns to King Hiram of Tyre, and built also other towns in the desert. These actions of Solomon are commented upon in the Bible as one of the symbols of his enlightened rule.⁶⁷ Thus, on the basis of the knowledge given by the Holy Scriptures, the Bulgarian chronicler raised the construction of towns to the level of a ruler’s supreme virtue. By attributing it to all Bulgarian tsars, he found a way of strengthening the authority of the virtuous ruler as a creator of order in the state and defender of public interests. These qualities were also inherent in the founder of the Bulgarian state, Tsar Ispor, i. e., Khan Asparuch. About him it is said: “And this tsar built big towns on the Danube, the town of Durostorum, [and he] also built a great rampart by the sea, he built the

⁶⁴ Каймакамова, „Историографската стойност“, 430.

⁶⁵ Тъпкова-Займова, Милтенова, *op. cit.*, 199.

⁶⁶ The same ethnonym is used in regard to the Greeks in the “Apocalypse of Ps.-Methodius” (Тъпкова-Займова, Милтенова, *op. cit.*, 178). This entry in the Old Bulgarian work is borrowed from the Greek text of the “Apocalypse”. In his commentary on the text, P. Alexander specifies that by “Ethiopia” the author means Rome (Constantinople). Cf. П. Александер. „Псевдо-Методий и Ефиопия“. *Античната древност и средните века*, 10. К 80-летию профессора Михаила Яковлевича Сюзюмова. Свердловск 1973, 22–4

⁶⁷ Неврокопски митрополит Пимен, *op. cit.*, 23.

town of Pliska, too.”⁶⁸ In a sense, this idea corresponds to the idea of *taxi*, or correct order, characteristic of the Byzantine doctrine of power. According to the sources, the Byzantine ideologists inherited that idea of correct order from the Hellenistic state tradition.⁶⁹ Apparently, in the author’s understanding, the construction of towns by the tsars was a ruler’s virtue, closely related to the idea of building the state. The author’s constant use of the phrase “and created towns” in almost all of the records dedicated to the reign of the Bulgarian tsars supports this conclusion. Only in regard to the first tsar, Slav (an eponym for the Slavs who had settled in the area before the Bulgarians), who personifies Slavic participation in the Bulgarian state, it is said, that this tsar “populated provinces and towns,” and “created a hundred mounds in the Bulgarian land.”

Manliness was another important quality characteristic of the rulers who founded and reigned over the Bulgarian Kingdom. In regard to the founder of medieval Bulgaria, Tsar Ispor, manliness is associated with the “destruction of a great number of Ismailites (i.e. Khazars – *M. K.*). It is said that he died during a battle with them.”⁷⁰

The second main element used to describe the reigns of the rulers is their genealogy. Through genealogy, the chronicler confirms the thesis about hereditary power as an order sanctioned by God. By presenting the lineage of the Bulgarian rulers, the author develops the idea that only the family of the tsar produces rulers truly worthy of holding the power given by God. He names Khan Asparuch as the root of the Bulgarian rulers’ family tree, called by the name Ispor and mentioned immediately after the legendary Tsar Slav: “And then, after him another tsar was born in the Bulgarian land, a child carried in a basket for three years, who was given the name Tsar Ispor.” The fact that the author does not connect Tsar Ispor’s origin with Tsar Slav deserves consideration. Further on in the narrative, Ispor is presented as the forefather of all Bulgarian rulers up to and including Tsar Peter.⁷¹ This clearly indicates that the author knew about the “divine origin” of royal power and the way Bulgarian state power arose and developed. He was aware that inheriting the throne and designating rulers from one particular dynasty characterized

⁶⁸ Тъпкова-Заимова, Милтенова, *op. cit.*

⁶⁹ Г. Бакалов. *Византия. Лекционен курс*. София 2006, 287–9.

⁷⁰ И. Дуйчев. „Едно легендарно сведение за Аспарух“. *Ип: Дуйчев, Българско средновековие*, 122–33.

⁷¹ Каймакамова, „Историографската стойност“, 434.

Bulgarian rule. In support of this conclusion, we shall point out another characteristic feature of the structure of the narrative. It is related to the fact that every single tsar between Ispor and Peter was a direct descendant of the preceding one. It is said in the text: "And Ispor bore an infant, and called him Izot;" "And Izot bore two infants [and] one of them he called Boris, and the other Symeon;" "And Tsar Symeon (...) bore St. Peter, the Bulgarian tsar, a holy man and mighty pious."⁷² Here we detect the influence of the biblical model and more particularly of the *First Book of Moses (Genesis 5: 3-6)*, dedicated to the genealogy of Adam.⁷³

The third constant element of the author's design, according to which the reigns of the Bulgarian rulers are traced in relation to the founding and development of the Bulgarian state, is providing the number of years on the throne for each one of them. For some of the rulers, the author indicates long periods of reign, calling to mind the biblical kings. For others, their reigns are short and fully realistic. The situation strongly resembles the chronological data in the *Name List of the Bulgarian Khans*. The group of rulers with legendary durations of reign includes the first rulers mentioned in the *Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle*, whose activities were related to the foundation and the initial stages of development of the Bulgarian state. These were: Tsar Slav – 119 years of reign, Tsar Ispor – 172 years, and Tsar Izot – 100 years. This list of the longer and shorter periods of reign fulfills particular functions. By stressing the unlikely long reigns of certain rulers, the author revives the concept of the antiquity of the Bulgarian state tradition, harmonized with the Christian ideology, and re-created in the style of the biblical tradition. The aim of presenting the shorter periods of reign was probably to create the impression of a more realistic attitude towards events in history. We may assume that the estimation of these years, particularly of the long periods of reign, was done by the author on the basis of sources and in compliance with particular rules.⁷⁴

The content of the *Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle* reveals the complex nature of its inner structure. It shows that in the course of his work, the author used certain stylistic methods and rhetorical skills, with which he organized the collected source material and individualized his historical work. Most

⁷² Тѣпкова-Займова, Милтенова, *op. cit.*, 199–200.

⁷³ Каймакамова, „Историографската стойност“, 434.

⁷⁴ Каймакамова, *op. cit.*, 435.

likely, he used sources of a variety of genres.. This suggests that the chronicler may have had at his disposal written and oral sources disseminated by his contemporaries. The language and style of the Bible observed in the narrative reveal the author's culture of thinking and his skill in interpreting the Holy Scriptures.⁷⁵ At the same time, they characterize even more clearly the ideology of the author as a historian of a particular time and place. The work penned by him is characteristic of an Orthodox monk. The rigor of his morality is manifested in his attitude towards the morals of the ruler.

The idealization of the Bulgarian past by the author justifiably raises the question about the veracity of the account. This problem deserves detailed investigation. Here we will restrict ourselves to the conclusion that there were no great falsifications of history as in a number of medieval chronicles. The Bulgarian author had respect for historical facts. As St Augustine had pointed out, hiding the truth in history with the aid of silence still did not amount to lying. The idealization of the Bulgarian past stemmed from the propaganda goal of the chronicler. Under the conditions of the Byzantine rule he aimed at confirming the sacral character and the historical continuity of the Bulgarian Kingdom. In this respect, he differed in no way from other medieval monastic chroniclers.⁷⁶

The Brief Bulgarian Chronicle

Many of the ideas about the foundation of the Bulgarian state from the *Name List of the Bulgarian Khans* and the *Bulgarian Chronograph* were revived and renewed in the *Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle*. Through the *Apocryphal Chronicle*, some of those ideas were transferred to the official Bulgarian historiography of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. A case in point is the *Brief Bulgarian Chronicle*, incorporated in the Bulgarian translation of the *Chronicle* of Constantine Manasses.⁷⁷ It was likely written in 1361–1362 by

⁷⁵ Lately, the issue of biblical language in medieval historical writings has regained its relevance in Medieval Studies. Cf.: С. Лучицкая. „Язык Библии в нарative“. In: *Одиссей. Человек в истории*. Москва 2003, 5–8.

⁷⁶ Cf. Каймакамова, „Историографската стойност“, 438.

⁷⁷ М. Каймакамова. „Българската кратка хроника в среднобългарския превод на Манасиевата хроника. 1. Текст, превод и коментар“. *Годишник на Софийски Университет „Климент Охридски“*. Исторически факултет, 76 (1983), 131–41; eadem. *Българска средновековна историопис*, 71–7.

a member of the Tŭrnovo literary school. It contains twenty-seven entries on various events in world, Byzantine, and Bulgarian history, about which little or nothing exists in the Byzantine prototype. Its main sources are the translated Byzantine chronicles of George Amartolus, Symeon Logothete, and Joannes Zonaras, in which the history of the Bulgarians begins in the fifth century and continues until the lifetime of the particular author. The Bulgarian chronicler, like many other medieval chroniclers, regarded biblical history as a necessary introduction to Bulgarian history. For that reason, nine chronicle entries are dedicated to the former, informing readers about important events related to the Assyro-Babylonian, Egyptian, Persian, and Roman Empires. The rest of the entries concern events from the history of the Bulgarian Kingdom. In this way, the history of the Bulgarian state was incorporated in the general flow of biblical history. The universalization of Bulgarian history continues through the description of a number of important events in Bulgarian-Byzantine relations. The narrative dedicated to the founding and development of the Bulgarian state at the time of the “eternal” Roman kingdom, embodied by Byzantium, continues to the time of Tsar Asen I, from whose family descended Tsar Ivan Alexander (1331–1371), who commissioned the translation of *Manasses’ Chronicle*, and most likely the *Brief Bulgarian Chronicle* as well.⁷⁸ In this way, the genealogy of the Bulgarian Kingdom is connected to biblical antiquity. The author of the chronicle emphasizes the importance of tradition in the Bulgarian succession of imperial power. The dynastic idea is reinforced in the transference of power from the Khanate at Pliska, through the tsars at Preslav and Ohrid, to the tsars at Tŭrnovo.

Two entries deal with the formation of the Bulgarian state. The first one states that “Under Tsar Anastasius, the Bulgarians began taking possession of this land, crossing from Bdin, first capturing the lower Ohrid region and afterwards the entire country. From the Bulgarian exodus to this day are

⁷⁸By incorporating the *Brief Bulgarian Chronicle* into the text of *Manasses’ Chronicle*, the author enhances the information about the role of the Bulgarians and their state in world history. The Bulgarian translation of the above-mentioned Byzantine work, the “Tŭrnovo – New Constantinople – Third Rome” concept, binding into a whole the ruler, the patriarch, and the capital as the embodiment of the Bulgarian Kingdom, is historically substantiated. Cf.: M. Kaimakamova. “Tŭrnovo – New Constantinople: ‘The Third Rome in the Fourteenth-Century Bulgarian ‘Translation of Constantine Manasses’ Synopsis Chronicle.” In: E. Kooper, ed. *The Medieval Chronicle IV*. Amsterdam–New York 2006, 91–104.

870 years.”⁷⁹ From the second entry, we learn that “Under Constantine the Bearded (i.e. Emperor Constantine IV – *M. K.*), the Sixth Ecumenical Council took place. At the time of this Tsar Constantine the Bulgarians crossed over the Danube and after defeating the Greeks seized this land where they live to this day. Formerly this land was called Moesia. Being countless in number, [they] filled this side of the Danube, too, and the part near Dyrrhachium and further, because the Wallachians and the Serbs, and all the rest, are one.”⁸⁰

Comparative analysis of the two Bulgarian entries, on the one hand, and the entries in the Byzantine sources about the events described, on the other hand, demonstrates their reliability.⁸¹ They are dedicated to the emergence and territorial development of the Bulgarian state, which the author perceives as a prolonged process. Another common element between the two entries is that in both of them the founding of medieval Bulgaria is associated with the seizure of certain territories from Byzantium. In the author’s view, which was shared by his contemporaries, it was precisely this conquest that determined the Bulgarians’ “legal” right to the captured territories and gave grounds for the legitimization of Bulgarian control. In both entries, the chronicler speaks about “this land” in the sense of Bulgarian land, meaning state territory. Toponyms give a good idea about its scope. The starting and finishing points of the Bulgarian conquests from north to southwest are indicated, and then again extended northward, i. e. from Bdin to the lower Ohrid land, “and afterward this entire land.”

The first entry presents the formation of the state territory as a process starting with the Bulgarian attacks against Byzantium at the end of the fifth century, during the reign of Emperor Anastasius (491–518), continuing with the Bulgarians’ settling down in the captured territories in the Balkan southwest in the sixth–seventh centuries, and ending with the establishing of the Bulgarian state.⁸² This entry creates a generalized notion about the significance of the Bulgarians as a factor in the history of Byzantium. Also of great importance is the entry stating, “from the Bulgarian exodus to this day are 870 years.” It enforces the notion about the centuries-long existence of the Bulgarians in the lands where they established their state. We can conclude

⁷⁹ Каймакамова, „Българската кратка хроника“, 139.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Каймакамова, *op. cit.*, 143–6.

⁸² Каймакамова, *op. cit.*, 147–53.

that the first entry shores up their historical right to the territory where their state was founded.

The second entry deals with the events leading to the foundation of the Bulgarian state after the victory of the “Bulgarians” against the “Greeks” and their Emperor Constantine the Bearded. Here, the victory of Asparuch’s Bulgarians against the army of Emperor Constantine IV Pogonatus (668–685) in the battle at the Onglos in the early autumn of 680 is described, as well as the advancement of the Bulgarians in the territories farther south of the Danube.⁸³ It was important to note that these events coincided with the Sixth Ecumenical Council as it introduced a theological and sacred dimension to the founding of the Bulgarian state. This entry dates in an original and rather impressive way the emergence of medieval Bulgaria. It emphasizes the Bulgarians’ domination over a vast territory between the Danube and Dyrrhachium, inhabited by Wallachians, Serbs, “and all the rest.”

The evidence about the territorial scope of the Bulgarian state merits special consideration. According to the chronicler, “being countless in number, they [the Bulgarians – *M. K.*] filled this side of the Danube, too, and the parts near Dyrrhachium.” From a historical point of view, this brief description is important for three reasons:

- 1) It is similar to the entry in the *Name List of the Bulgarian Khans* and shows that both in the eighth and in the fourteenth century Bulgarian medieval historiography continued to uphold the view that the lands around the Danube were ancient territory of the Bulgarian state.
- 2) The entry shows that even in the fourteenth century, the Bulgarian conquest of the territories around the Danube continued to be at the center of the historical memory of the Bulgarians, and served as reference point for the time period in which the Bulgarian state was founded.
- 3) By marking the Danube and Dyrrhachium as frontiers of the Bulgarian state, the parameters of Orthodoxy, protected by the Bulgarian Kingdom in the fourteenth century against the aspirations of Papal Rome, were defined. It is for that reason that the chronicler emphasizes

⁸³ Каймакамова, *op. cit.*, 153–5.

that “the Wallachians, and the Serbs, and all the rest are one,” meaning the common faith of the Bulgarians and the other Balkan peoples.

We can conclude, therefore, that medieval Bulgarian historiography differed from foreign history writing by presenting the formation of the Bulgarian state as a prolonged process that passed through a variety of stages. The medieval Bulgarian conceptualization of the state-building process began taking shape with the *Name List of the Bulgarian Khans* in the eighth century, and ended with the *Brief Bulgarian Chronicle* in the fourteenth century.⁸⁴ The latter was incorporated in Constantine Manasses’ *Chronicle* quite purposefully in order to strengthen the authority of the Bulgarian Kingdom in world history as a protector of Eastern Orthodoxy.

To sum up: the narratives on the founding of the Bulgarian state in medieval Bulgarian historiography changed in the course of the evolution of the Bulgarian state from khanate to kingdom. Initially, when the state was organized on military principles, the ruler attained fundamental significance as the bearer of state power. Later, when after its Christianization Bulgaria became a kingdom, the theories about the founding of the Bulgarian state developed on the basis of Christian ideology. At this point, the ideas about the formation of the state broadened and the importance of the other two main elements of state organization – the people and the territory of the state – also came to the fore in historical writing. Even though the writers discussed in this paper lived and worked in different times, they unanimously defined the territories around the Danube as the kernel from which the medieval Bulgarian state with its political structure sprang out. The sources discussed above laid the foundations of medieval Bulgarian historiography and set the authoritative direction for the discussion of the origins and nature of the medieval Bulgarian state.

⁸⁴ Каймакамова, *Българска средновековна историопис*, 76.

**THE “AVAR COSTUME” VERSUS THE *SKARAMANGION*:
SYMBOLISM OF THE MALE ARISTOCRATIC DRESS IN BULGARIA,
NINTH–TENTH CENTURIES**

Liliana V. Simeonova

In medieval societies, the multilevel symbolism that was vested with the court ceremonies and public processions, the exterior and interior design of buildings, and the public spaces served as an important source of information for the onlookers, as the latter were fully capable of reading into the language of signs or symbols. For the authorities, that kind of complex symbolism was an efficient means of political and religious propaganda. Collective feasting, dance and music as well as the visual and performing arts, served as audio- and visual means of propaganda, too. On an individual level, who-is-who type of information could be drawn from a variety of sources, such as the place assigned to a certain person was in the public processions, court ceremonies and court banquets, or the means of transportation one used, or the number of retainers one could afford. One of the most important social and ethnic signifiers, however, was dress.¹ Clothes – with their fabric, cut and color, and the accessories that went with them – “spoke” on behalf of their wearer, revealing that person’s social status, occupation, and ethnic background.²

For want of sufficient evidence, it is impossible to describe in detail the everyday dress of the minorities living in the periphery of Byzantium or that of the population of the neighboring countries. According to the Byzantine

¹ On the symbolism of clothing and tailoring in Byzantium see A. Muthesius. “Textiles and Dress in Byzantium.” In: *Material Culture and Well-Being in Byzantium (400–1453). Proceedings of the International Conference*. Cambridge, 8–10 Sept. 2001. Eds. M. Grünbart et al. [*Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung*, Bd. XI]. Wien 2007, 159–169, see especially p. 159. Cf. E. Piltz. “Middle Byzantine Court Costume.” In: *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*. Ed. H. Maguire. Washington, D. C. 1997, 39–51.

² On dress as an ethnic identifier in Constantinople, see L. Simeonova. “Constantinopolitan Attitudes towards Aliens and Minorities, the 860s – the 1020s. Part Two.” *Etudes balkaniques* 37 (2001), 83–98, see especially pp. 85–93.

sources, some foreigners and minorities, such as the Bulgarians, the Arabs, and the Armenians, had an identifiable ethnic costume; other ethnic groups in the Empire are also said to have been wearing traditional attire. As the ethnic dress of the Empire's minorities and of the neighboring peoples seems to have been easily identifiable by the populace of the Byzantine cities, no Byzantine author has ever bothered to describe it in detail. All we know is that in Constantinople the ethnic costume was generally seen as grotesque.³

How the aristocracy dressed was a different matter. Ethnic dress seems to have been unacceptable in the relatively closed circles of the Byzantine, or Byzantinized, provincial elites, which is why the elites of the minorities living within the borders of the Empire unconditionally dressed as "Romans".⁴ The elites of the neighboring countries, however, displayed a certain duality in their manner of dressing. On some occasions, they dressed as members of the Byzantine elite, while on others they opted for the ethnic dress of their fellow-countrymen.⁵ Thus, Bulgarian male aristocrats are described as wearing Byzantine-style clothes on some occasions while sporting a different type of attire on other occasions.

Was this dual manner of dressing of the ninth- and tenth-century Bulgarian aristocracy a reflection of an identity crisis of sorts? Or, did the Bulgarian ruling elite opt for different types of clothing on different occasions, depending on what the motives behind their political actions were? Or, was it that rival factions at the Bulgarian court stuck to different types of costume, to underscore their conflicting views? Be that as it may, a closer look at the little that is known about the ninth- and tenth-century male aristocrat's dress in Bulgaria may shed some light on how and why members of the Bulgarian ruling elite dressed as they did.

While the surviving Bulgarian sources consist of some archaeological evidence and manuscript illuminations, the few known narrative sources that mention the clothing of Bulgarians are – without exception – of non-Bulgarian

³ C. Mango. "Daily Life in Byzantium." In: Idem, *Byzantium and Its Image* [VR]. London 1984, Study IV, 350–351.

⁴ N. Garsoïan. "The Problem of Armenian Integration into the Byzantine Empire." In: *Studies on the Internal Diaspora of the Byzantine Empire*. Ed. by H. Ahrweiler and A. E. Laiou. Washington, D.C. 1997, 53–124, n. 143, 169, 188.

⁵ A. Guillou. "Production and Profits in the Byzantine Province of Italy (Tenth to Eleventh Centuries): An Expanding Society." In: idem. *Culture et Société en Italie byzantine* [VR]. London 1978, Study XIII, 98–100, 108.

origin. Some ninth-century Byzantine authors, for example, describe the Bulgarians as being clad in iron from head to toe. One of the earliest sources to refer to the Bulgarians as being fully ironclad (Gr.: *holosēderoi*) is the so-called *Scriptor incertus* – an anonymous chronicle of the reign of Michael I (811–813), which is partially preserved in an eleventh-century manuscript (*Cod. Paris. gr.* 1711).⁶ Also, there are illuminated Byzantine and Bulgarian manuscripts, which abound in battle scenes with ironclad Bulgarians in them.⁷ This stereotypical collective image of the Bulgarians, however, applies to the invading Bulgarian armies rather than the formal or informal attire of the Bulgarian aristocracy.

The Caftan – a Potent Symbol of Power

Bulgarian men seem to have been wearing some attire, which is described by a tenth-century Byzantine source, the *Suidas* lexicon, as being "Avar": "*the Bulgarians were pleased [to be drawn] into the clothing of the Avars and they adopted it and wear it right up to the present day*".⁸ As for the original ethnic costume of the Avars, the only – and rather vague – description of it can be found in a military treatise, which is wrongly ascribed to the Byzantine Emperor Maurice, or Mauritius (582–602). According to Pseudo-Mauritius, the Avar costume was wide and long, suitable for riders.⁹ In his account of the Avar embassy to Justinian I in AD 558, the ninth-century chronicler Theophanes Confessor writes that the populace of Constantinople regarded their appearance as strange: "the strange race of the so-called Avars reached Byzantium [i.e., Constantinople] and everyone in the city thronged to see them, as they had

⁶ *Scriptoris incerti Historia de Leone Bardae filio apud Leonis Grammatici Chronographia*. Rec. I. Bekker. Bonn, 1842, 335–362. Cf. A. Kazhdan – L. Sherry. "Some Notes on the Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio." *Byzantinoslavica* 58 (1997), 110–112.

⁷ See, for example, C. Estopañan. *Skylitzes Matritensis*, vol. I: *Reproducciones y miniaturas*. Barcelona, 1965, fol. 35. For an analysis of the Bulgaria-related illuminations in the Madrid Skylitzes, see A. Божков. *Миниатюри от Мадридския ръкопис на Йоан Скилица*. София, 1972. See also the illuminated manuscripts of the Bulgarian translation of Constantine Manasses' *Chronicle*, which has a number of miniatures with ironclad Bulgarians in them: *Cod. Vat. slav. II*, fols. 145, 146, 178a. Cf. B. Filow. *Les miniatures de la Chronique de Manassès à la Bibliothèque du Vatican (Cod. Vat. slav. II)*. Sofia 1927.

⁸ *Suidae Lexikon*. Ed. A. Adler. Lipsiae 1928; repr.: Stuttgart 1967, I: 483 : *Boulgaroi*. Cf. the English translation: *Suda On Line*.

⁹ Mauritius. *Arta militara*. Ed. H. Mihăescu. Bucharest 1970, 52.

never seen such people. They wore their hair very long at the back and tied with ribbons and plated. The rest of their dress was like that of the other Huns.”¹⁰ Theophanes seems to have borrowed this passage from a sixth-century author, Menander Protector.¹¹

Why would authors, like Menander Protector and Theophanes Confessor describe the Avar ethnic costume as being identical with “*that of the other Huns*”? They must have done so because the elitist Byzantine writers shared the view that all the peoples with a nomadic past wore pretty much the same type of clothing.¹² For the same reason, the compiler of the *Suidas* lexicon may have considered it unnecessary to offer a detailed description of the “Avar” (nomad-style?) costume of the Bulgarians. V. Beševliev suggests that the Bulgarians’ “Avar clothing” may have been some military-style attire, which was adopted if not by the whole of Bulgarian society at least by a certain faction of it, most probably the male heirs to the Proto-Bulgarian aristocracy old.¹³

Yet, there is another tenth-century Byzantine source, the *Miracula S. Georgii*, which specifically mentions the existence of a distinguishable Bulgarian ethnic costume. It seems to have been worn by the commonality rather, than the nobility. Thus, one of St. George’s miracles resulted in the liberation from Bulgarian captivity of a Byzantine young man who worked as a servant in a Bulgarian nobleman’s household; when, with the help of the saint, the young man miraculously appeared before his friends and family in Paphlagonia, he was still wearing a “Bulgarian costume.”¹⁴ The author of the *Miracula*, however, does not specify what that Bulgarian ethnic costume was like.

The only literary description of a Bulgarian male aristocrat’s costume was penned by Ibrahim ibn-Yakub, who is also known as al-Tartushi. He was a

¹⁰ *Theophanis Chronographia*. Ed. C. de Boor. Lipsiae 1883, I: 232.6–13. Cf. *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor. Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284 – 813*. Trans. with an introd. and comment. by C. Mango and R. Scott. Oxford 1997, 339.

¹¹ Menander, frg. 4, in *Fragmenta historicorum graecorum*. Ed. C. W. Müller. Parisii 1885, IV, 200. Cf. R. C. Blockley, *The History of Menander the Guardsman: Introductory Essay, Text, Translation and Historiographical Notes*. Liverpool 1985, 287, n. 329.

¹² On the confusing of the Avars with the Huns by the Byzantine authors, see Gy. Moravcsik. *Byzantinoturcica*, Bd. I: *Die byzantinischen Quellen der Geschichte der Türkvölker*. 2te Aufl. Berlin 1958, 53.

¹³ В. Бешевлиев. *Първобългарите. Бит и култура*. София 1981, 99.

¹⁴ *Miracula S. Georgii*. Rec. J. B. Aufhauser. Leipzig 1913, 30.

Hispano-Arabic, plausibly Jewish, traveler who in 965 met with some Bulgarian ambassadors to the German court. According to al-Tartushi, the Bulgarians were wearing "tight-fitting clothes and long waistbands studded with silver and gold buttons."¹⁵ The Bulgarian waistbands or studded belts deserve special attention and will be discussed later in this study. Here I will focus briefly on the Bulgarians' tightly fitting clothes, which most probably were straight caftans.

That Bulgarian men of higher social standing may have been wearing caftans is shown by a martyrdom scene in the so-called *Menologion of Basil II* (*Cod. Vat. gr.* 1613); in it, three pagan Bulgarians are slaughtering Byzantine Christians.¹⁶ Two of the said Bulgarians are dressed in short, tightly-fitting double-breasted cloaks – probably caftans made of embroidered brocade – and hose. As for the third Bulgarian in the scene, his clothing consists of hose, a long (sheep-skin?) double-breasted cloak, a leather belt that has a knife and some other accessories attached to it, and a conical fur-trimmed hat. As has been noted by J. Ivanoff, in Byzantine illuminated manuscripts there are a number of scenes with Bulgarians wearing conical hats.¹⁷

In the above-said martyrdom scene, one of the pagan Bulgarians has a shaven head – a fact that refers the viewer to the Proto-Bulgarians' ancient customs. Amongst steppe peoples it was customary for men to have their heads shaven, as can be seen from the *Name List of the Bulgarian Khans*¹⁸ and

¹⁵ Ibrahim ibn Yakub, *Relatio de itinere slavico*. Ed., trans. and comment. by T. Kowalski. In: *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, n.s. Kraków 1946, I: 326 sq. For an earlier edition of ibn Yakub's account, see G. Jacob, Hrsg. *Arabische Berichte von Gesandten an germanischen Fürstenhöfe aus dem 9. und 10. Jahrhundert* [Quelle zur deutschen Volkskunde. Hft. 1]. Berlin–Leipzig 1927. Cf. В. Златарски. „Известието на Ибрахим ибн Якуба за българите от 965 година.“ In: idem. *Избрани произведения*. София 1984, II: 76–77.

¹⁶ On 896 as a possible date of composition of the *Menologion*, see S. Der Nersessian. "Remarks on the Date of the Menologium and the Psalter Written for Basil II." In: Eadem. *Études byzantines et arméniennes*. Louvain 1973, I: 121. Dates as late as 1000 and even 1018 have been proposed: cf. I. Ševčenko. "On Pantoleon the Painter." *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik* 21 (1972), 241–249. On the similarities in the artistic styles of Basil II's *Menologion* and some scenes in Hosios Loukas, see C. L. Connor. *Art and Miracles in Medieval Byzantium: The Crypt at Hosios Loukas and Its Frescoes*. Princeton, 1991.

¹⁷ J. Ivanoff. *Le costume des anciens Bulgares. L'art byzantin chez les Slaves*. Premier recueil dédié à la mémoire de T. Uspensky. Paris 1930, 326 sq. See also В. Бешевлиев. *Първобългарите*, 100.

¹⁸ O. Pritsak. *Die bulgarischen Fürstenliste und die Sprache der Protobulgaren*. Wiesbaden,

the so-called *Hungarian Anonymous Chronicle*.¹⁹ According to al-Hassan al-Hamadani, an Arab author of the first half of the tenth century, “the [Volga] Bulgars shave their heads and wear short caftans”.²⁰

What is a caftan? This is a man’s cotton, linen, silk or woolen cloak buttoned down the front, with elbow-length or long sleeves, reaching to the knees or ankles, tied at the waist by a girdle. The caftan was widespread in the medieval world, covering a vast area from Central Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean to the North Caucasus and the Russian steppe, as well as parts of Eastern and Central Europe, and Scandinavia. Being an expensive type of cloak, the caftan was normally worn by men of substantial means and higher social standing. According to the tenth-century Arab authors ibn Fadlan and ibn Rusteh, for example, the so-called *rūs* used to wear caftans. (The *rūs* were Varangian traders who, in the eighth through the tenth century, travelled as far as Central Asia and the Abbasid Caliphate and then back to Kiev and Scandinavia.) Ibn Fadlan writes that upon the death of a Varangian chief, one third of his estate goes toward covering his funeral expenses, including his luxury burial clothing; the latter consists of, among other things, a silk gold-buttoned caftan and a fur-trimmed hat.²¹ Pieces of burial silk caftans, fur-lined silk brocade hats and gold buttons have been discovered in necropolises in Eastern Europe, as well as in Scandinavia (specifically in Birka).²² Caftans have been found in eighth- to tenth-century Alan burial sites in the North Caucasus, too.²³

1955, 76–77; V. Beševliev. *Die protobulgarische Inschriften*. Berlin, 1963, 10–11. The *Name List* was probably composed in Greek, most likely on stone; later on, it was translated into Old Slavonic; it has been preserved in three Russian manuscripts.: cf. K. Petkov. *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria, Seventh–Fifteenth Century. The Records of a Bygone Culture*. Leiden – Boston 2008, 3–5, 550, no. 10.

¹⁹ V. Beševliev. *Die protobulgarische Inschriften*. 306–323. Cf. *Fontes historiae bulgaricae*. Sofia 2001, XXXI, 13–62, esp. p. 22.

²⁰ A. Al-Azmeh. “Barbarians in Arab Eyes.” *Past and Present* 134 (1992), 3–18.

²¹ S. E. Flowers. *Ibn Fadlan's Travel-Report: As It Concerns the Scandinavian Rūs*. Smithville, TX 1998.

²² W. Duczko. *Viking Rus: Studies on the Presence of Scandinavians in Eastern Europe* [The Northern World, vol. 12]. Leiden 2004, 148.

²³ E.R. Knauer. “A Man’s Caftan and Leggings from the North Caucasus of the Eighth to the Tenth Century: A Genealogical Study.” *Metropolitan Museum Journal*. 36 (2001), 125–154. Cf. N. Kajitani. “A Man’s Caftan and Leggings from the North Caucasus of the Eighth to Tenth Century: A Conservator’s Report.” *Metropolitan Museum Journal*. 36

In Byzantium, the two basic types of man's attire were the silk *skaramangion* and the caftan; the *skaramangion* was worn on formal occasions, whereas the caftan was an everyday type of cloak; both types of men's clothing are said to have been of Eastern origin.²⁴ In eleventh- and twelfth-century Byzantium, for example, the traditional full-length patrician costume consisted of a full caftan with wide sleeves or a straight caftan with tight sleeves; the caftan was normally worn with high boots; its hems were tucked up when the man was riding.²⁵

Normally, caftans went with leggings or hose. (In Byzantium, however, hose and leggings were usually associated with the "barbarians," European or Asian.) In the *Menologion* martyrdom scene the three Bulgarians are wearing hose, or long tight trousers (Fig. 1).



Figure 1.
Martyrdom scene with pagan Bulgarians killing Byzantine Christians. *Menologion* of Basil II, Constantinople (Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. gr. 1613)

Probably it was the traditional attire of men and women in ninth-century Bulgaria that made Pope Nicholas I (858–867) write that the Bulgarians, as a rule, wore *femoralia* (trousers?).²⁶

(2001), 85–124.

²⁴ N.P. Kondakov. "Les costumes orientaux a la cour byzantine." *Byzantion* 1 (1924), 7–49.

²⁵ A.P. Kazhdan – A. Wharton Epstein. *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*. Berkeley – Los Angeles – London 1985, 76.

²⁶ Pope Nicholas I. *Responsa ad Consulta Bulgarorum*, cap. LIX, in *MGH Epistulae* VI. ed. E. Perels. 588.26–45. Cf. L. Simeonova. *Diplomacy of the Letter and the Cross. Photios, Bulgaria and the Papacy, 860s – 880s*. [Classical and Byzantine Monographs XLI]. Amsterdam 1998 205.

Some scholars suggest that as far as the men's clothes fashion in ninth- and tenth-century Danube Bulgaria was concerned, there may have been a direct Central-Asian connection to it.²⁷ There is no evidence, however, that there were any direct Central-Asian imports into Danube Bulgaria in that period. On the other hand, according to an early-tenth-century source, the *Book of the Eparch*, Bulgarian wholesalers were allowed to purchase silk fabrics in a satellite market located outside Constantinople.²⁸ Being of low quality and insufficient width, neither of the pieces of silk fabric that the Bulgarians purchased in that market would do for a *skaramangion*, but it could probably do for the decoration of a fancy caftan.

By the late ninth century, the Magyars too had developed a taste for Byzantine fancy fabrics and accessories. According to ibn Rusteh, Magyars used to meet with Byzantine merchants on the Black Sea coast in order to trade slaves and other steppe commodities for Byzantine silk fabrics and other luxury goods.²⁹ But, judging mostly by the available archaeological evidence, modern scholars tend to agree that the late ninth- and early-tenth-century Magyars wore a double-lapelled caftan.³⁰

Speaking of the steppe peoples' ancient wear, one could also look into some late medieval Hungarian sources, which provide information of the Cumans' clothing. In addition to some archaeological finds coming from Cuman burials

²⁷ There is a striking similarity between the fabric design of medieval caftans from Central Asia, on the one hand, and the fabric design of the cloaks of two of the Bulgarians in the *Menologion* scene, on the other. Cf. И. Чокоев. "Към въпроса за облеклото от Първото българско царство" In: *Studia protobulgarica et medievalia europensia. In honorem V. Veševliev*. София 2003, 248–255.

²⁸ *Book of the Eparch*, IX.6. In: *Византийская книга Эпарха. Перев., ред. и коммент. М.Я. Сюзюмова*. Москва 1962, 59. Cf. N. Oikonomides, "The Economic Region of Constantinople: from Directed Economy to Free Economy, and the Role of the Italians." In: *Europa medievale e mondo bizantino*. A cura di G. Arnaldi e G. Cavallo. Rome 1997, 221–253, esp. pp. 228–229.

²⁹ Ibn Rusta. *Les atours précieux*. Trad. par G. Wiet. Cairo 1955, 161. Cf. J. Shepard. "Byzantium and the Steppe Nomads: The Hungarian Dimension." In: *Byzanz und Ostmitteleuropa: Beiträge zu einer table-ronde des XIX International Congress of Byzantine Studies Copenhagen 1996*. Hg. G. Prinzing – M. Salamon [Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik 3]. Wiesbaden 1999, 53–83.

³⁰ L. Révész – I. M. Nepper. "The Archaeological Heritage of the Ancient Hungarians." In: I. Fodor (ed.). *The Ancient Hungarians*. [Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum]. Budapest 1996.

on Hungarian territory, there are manuscript illuminations³¹ and murals³² that represent realistic elements of the Cuman attire. Cuman men appear in long caftans, fastened by a belt, wearing high conical hats, occasionally chain-mail, and a helmet. Archaeological finds from the late thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries indicate that Cuman women too continued to wear traditional attire, which consisted of a caftan and trousers.³³

Let us now go back to the so-called Avar clothing, which the Bulgarians – according to the *Suidas* lexicon – liked to wear. Most probably, it consisted of a caftan, hose (or long trousers), and a studded belt, from which various objects were suspended. The caftan usually went with a conical fur-trimmed hat. (One of the three pagan Bulgarians in the *Menologion* scene has his caftan-like, double-breasted coat fastened with a belt from which a knife and other personal belongings are suspended; he has a conical fur-trimmed hat on his head (Fig. 2).



Figure 2.
Bulgarian man in a caftan-like coat.
Menologion of Basil II, detail.

Because the fancy brocade or satin caftan was an expensive type of cloak, it was the Bulgarian men of higher social status and substantial means who could

³¹ See especially the so-called *Illuminated Chronicle* (with 147 miniatures), which was written on the basis of an earlier Hungarian chronicle in the second half of the 14th century, and the *Angevin Legendary*, which is a manuscript of saints' *vitae*, produced for the Angevins of Hungary.

³² E.g., the murals that represent St. László fighting the Cuman.

³³ N. Berend. *At the Gate of Constantinople: Jews, Muslims, and "Pagans" in Medieval Hungary, c. 1000 – c. 1300*. Cambridge 2001, 256–257.

afford it. The caftan had a dual function: utilitarian and symbolic at the same time. It was suitable for riding while symbolizing power.

The Silken Wear – a Symbol of Belonging to the “Roman” Elite

Apart from wearing the so-called Avar clothes, the Bulgarian high-ranking male aristocrats seem to have dressed up occasionally as members of the “Roman” elite. The Bulgarian ruling elite began to develop a taste for Byzantine luxury goods, including silk robes of state, long before Bulgaria’s formal conversion to Byzantine Christianity in the 860s.

Let us first consider the numismatic evidence. On a twenty-carat gold medallion with an inscription consisting of Greek and Latin characters that reads “*CANES VBHTI OMOPTAI*”, presumably referring to the Bulgarian pagan ruler Omurtag (814–831),³⁴ there is a bust representing the said ruler in the guise of a Byzantine emperor, with the appropriate headdress and clothing, and a cross (!) in his right hand. Two copies of this medallion have been found.³⁵ The medallion is, in fact, a one-sided gold coin, its iconography being nearly identical with that of the Byzantine gold *solidi* that were struck in the period between the 800s and the 820s (Fig. 3).



Figure 3.
The gold medallion of Omurtag
(Sofia, National Historical Museum).

Recent chemical analysis of the gold alloy has shown that the medallion was, indeed, produced in the first half of the ninth century.³⁶

³⁴ The title of *canes ubigi* (or *cane subigi*) has only been used by three successive pagan Bulgarian rulers: Omurtag, Malamir, and Presian.

³⁵ И. Йорданов. “Златните медальони на хан Омуртаг (814–831)” – Втора национална конференция „Пътуване към България“. Шумен, 14 – 16 май 2010 г.

³⁶ П. Бонев. „РФ анализ на медальона на кан Омуртаг и византийски солиди от първа-

Who, where and – more importantly – why had that medallion made? Was it struck by order of the Byzantine imperial court, to be given to Omurtag as a diplomatic gift? Or was it produced by order of Omurtag who wished to present himself as being equal to the Roman emperor, for propaganda purposes? Neither of these two hypotheses can explain the presence of the cross in the right hand of Omurtag who is known for his severe persecutions of Christians. But then again, neither do some of Omurtag’s Greek-language stone inscriptions offer an explanation as to why he began to style himself “*ho ek Theou archon*” in Greek and to have a cross placed at the end of each text .

In addition to the above-mentioned gold medallion, there are two lead seals that represent members of the eighth-century Bulgarian elite as Christian “Romans”. The seals belonged to the Bulgarian ruler Tervel (c. 700/1–718 or 721?) and an aristocrat named Baian, respectively.³⁷ (Later in this study, I will consider those seals in greater detail, as they bear reference to the Byzantine practice of enlisting foreign nationals in the ranks of the Byzantine elite, by conferring imperial court titles upon them.)

How reliable a source are the cited artifacts? Their iconography tends to replicate the iconography of contemporary Byzantine coins and seals rather than present a truthful image of the men in question. While there is enough evidence in the written sources that both Tervel and Omurtag had considerable amounts of Byzantine silk wear at their disposal it is hard to believe that they would pose with the attributes of a Christian ruler.

Secondly, there are a number of miniatures in illuminated manuscripts that represent ninth-century Bulgarian rulers. In the so-called Madrid Scylitzes,³⁸ for example, there are miniatures in which two pagan Bulgarian rulers – Omurtag and his predecessor Krum (c. 803–814) – are dressed up as

та половина на IX в.“ – Втора национална конференция „Пътуване към България“. Шумен, 14 – 16 май 2010 г.

³⁷ G. Zacos and A. Vegler. *Byzantine Lead Seals*. Basel 1972, No. 2672: a lead seal of Tervel. Cf. И. Йорданов. *Корпус на монетите и печатите*. No. 19; V. Beševliev. *Die Protobulgarische Inschriften*. No. 83: a lead seal of the Patrician Baian. Cf. В. Бешевлиев. *Първобългарите*, 120.

³⁸ According to Wilson, the so-called Madrid Scylitzes was produced in a twelfth-century Southern-Italian scriptorium: cf. N. G. Wilson. “The Madrid Scylitzes.” *Scrittura et civiltà*, 2 (1978), 209–214.

Byzantine emperors, that is, with the appropriate formal attire and with red boots on their feet (Fig. 4).³⁹



Figure 4. Omurtag in a caftan-like coat, sitting on a throne. *Skyllitzes Matritensis* (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, *Codex Matritensis Græcus*, Vitr. 26-2, fol. 32)

Then there is also the Bulgarian translation of Constantine Manasses' Chronicle – a fourteenth-century illuminated manuscript, in which Krum is represented as celebrating his victory over Emperor Nicephorus I (802–811), drinking wine from the latter's skull. Krum is seated on a throne, dressed up as a *basileus*, and is surrounded by *skaramangion*-wearing noblemen.⁴⁰ All the surviving illuminated manuscripts, however, are of high- or late-medieval origin: the said "portraits" of ninth-century Bulgarian rulers are stylized and have little, if any, bearing to historical reality as far as the formal attire of those rulers is concerned.

Thirdly, there are the contemporary or near-contemporary written accounts such as those penned by Theophanes Confessor and Patriarch Nicephorus. Being a much more trustworthy group of sources, they provide information

³⁹ See, for example, C. Estopañan. *Skyllitzes Matritensis*, I, fols. 18, 32.

⁴⁰ *Cod. Vat. slav. II*, fol. 145.

about the Bulgarian pagan elite’s ever-growing taste for Byzantine luxury goods, including fancy silk clothes.

In Byzantium, the exports of high-quality silk fabrics and precious metals were banned. Fancy silks and other luxury objects were only sent out by the imperial government as diplomatic gifts or for the payment of tribute. Notwithstanding all those restrictions, however, in the sources there is ample evidence of the influx of Byzantine luxury goods into foreign countries.

One way for non-Byzantines to obtain Byzantine robes of state was through their being assimilated to the highest ranks in the imperial hierarchy – those of *magister* and *patricius*. In return for their formal recognition of the Empire’s supremacy, certain rulers of neighboring peoples would be given Byzantine court titles in a ceremony in which they donned a magisterial tunic (*himation*). As a rule, those tunics were paid for by the imperial treasury. Whenever the future dignitary could not to make it to Constantinople, a specially designated imperial official would be dispatched to his country, to bring the tunic to him.⁴¹ By being formally enlisted in the elite of *Romania*, the foreign holders of Byzantine court titles were considered, in theory at least, to be the emperor’s subjects. They were entitled to wearing silk *skaramangia* and *chlamydes*.

It was under Koubrat,⁴² in the first half of the seventh century, that the pagan Bulgarian elite first came into closer contact with the Byzantine court mores and clothes fashion. According to Patriarch Nicephorus, “Koubratos, the nephew of Organas and lord of the Onogundurs, rose against the Chagan of the Avars and, after abusing the army he had from the latter, drove them out of his land. He sent an embassy to Herakleios and concluded a peace treaty, which they observed until the end of their lives. [Herakleios] sent him gifts and honored him with the title of patrician.”⁴³ According to a seventh-century Egyptian source, Koubrat had spent his formative years in Constantinople and had been baptized by Heraclius (610–641), thus

⁴¹ Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, Vol. I: Greek text ed. by Gy. Moravcsik. English trans. by R. Jenkins. Budapest 1949, 216, cap. 46.49–53, in

⁴² On Koubrat, see P. Рашев. *Правъългарите през V – VII в.* София 2005, 120–127, 299–302.

⁴³ Nicephorus Patriarcha. *Opuscula historica*, cap. 22. Ed. C. de Boor. Lipsiae 1880, 12. Cf. *Nikephoros Patriarch of Constantinople, Short History*. Text, rans., and comment. by C. Mango [CFHB XIII]. Washington, DC 1990, 71.

becoming united with the emperor for the rest of his life.⁴⁴ The story of Koubrat's alleged baptism is not corroborated by any other source. It is safe to assume, however, that the gifts, which the emperor sent to him, must have included a magisterial tunic (*himation*) as well as some Byzantine robes of state.

In 705, Tervel, the ruler of Danube Bulgaria, was given the highest possible Byzantine court title of *kaisar* (i.e., *Caesar*), as a reward for the service he had rendered to Justinian II (685–695; 705–711), helping him to regain his throne. Theophanes Confessor writes that “Justinian regained the Empire and, after giving many gifts and imperial vessels to Terbelis, dismissed him in peace.”⁴⁵ But Theophanes omits to say that Justinian conferred on Tervel the title of *Caesar*. Here is what Patriarch Nicephorus has to say on that matter: “He [i.e., Justinian] showered many favors to the Bulgarian chief Terbelis, who was encamped outside the Blachernai wall, and finally sent for him, invested him with an imperial mantle, and proclaimed him Caesar. He had him sit by his side and ordered the people to pay homage to them jointly, and after showering him with many gifts, sent him home.”⁴⁶

According to the *Suidas* lexicon, “under Justinian Rhinotmetos Terbelis, the chieftain of the Bulgars, flourished; and this same Justinian and Constantine, the son of Heraclius, were tributary to him. For he [i.e., Tervel] laid on its back the shield that he had had in war, and his own whip that he used on his horse, and started pouring money in until he covered both of them. Having stuck his spear in the ground up to the end and put plenty of silk garments at its length and having filled boxes with gold and silver he started giving it away to the soldiers, using his right hand for the gold and the left one for the silver.”⁴⁷

Along with the Byzantine court titles, the foreign rulers or members of foreign elites usually received moulds of seals, with the appropriate title and symbols, to seal their correspondence with them. Non-Christians, such as the Bulgarian ruler Tervel who was granted the title of *Caesar* and the Bulgarian

⁴⁴ *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu*. Trans. by R.H. Charles. London 1916, 197.

⁴⁵ *Theophanis Chronographia* (ed. de Boor), I: 375. Cf. *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor* (trans. Mango – Scott), 522.

⁴⁶ *Nikephoros Patriarch of Constantinople* (ed. Mango), 42.38–59, 43.

⁴⁷ A. Adler, (ed.), *Suidae Lexikon*, I: 483: *Boulgaroi*.

aristocrat Baian who is believed to have been active in the 760s and was granted the Byzantine titles of *patricius* and *strategus*, had seals with Christian symbols engraved on them. Upon his defection to Byzantium, the former Bulgarian ruler Telerig (c. 772–778) was baptized and, under the Christian name of Theophylactus, became a *patricius* at the court of Leo IV (775–780).⁴⁸ On the reverse of the seals of Tervel, Telerig and Baian there are inscriptions invoking the help of the Virgin Mary or Jesus: e.g., “Mother of God, help the Caesar Tervel”, “Mother of God, help Baian, the *patricius* and *strategus*”, and “Christ, help Thy servant Telerig, the God-protected *patricius*.”⁴⁹

From a Byzantine point of view, the practice of granting court titles along with the appropriate seals to “barbarians” symbolized those men’s formal entry into the circles of the “Roman” elite. As for the Bulgarian ruler Tervel and the patrician Baian, they must have had an ambivalent attitude to that Byzantine practice: while accepting the Byzantine court titles and everything else that went with them, they remained bitterly opposed to Byzantine Christianity, which was regarded as a subversive ideology by the pagan Bulgarian elite.

The Byzantine policy of sending out expensive silk clothes to “barbaric” rulers in exchange for favors, future or granted, seems to have peaked in the first half of the tenth century. Romanus Lecapenus (920–944), for example, is said to have sent to the king of *Regnum Italicum* silk *skaramangia* in a variety of colors – yellow, pink, blue, and white.⁵⁰ Constantine Porphyrogenitus (913–959) disapproved of that practice and cautioned his son, the future Romanus II, against satisfying the excessive demands of the “barbarians” for Byzantine robes of state and royal trappings of power.⁵¹

Byzantine high-quality silks also reached the foreign courts by means of the tribute which the Byzantines occasionally paid to the “barbarians.” Beginning with the early eighth century, with the signature of each Byzantine-Bulgarian peace treaty, the Bulgarians received considerable amounts of silk,

⁴⁸ В.Н. Златарски. *История на българската държава през Средните векове*. 3то изд. София 1970, I/1, 298–313.

⁴⁹ В. Бешевлиев. *Първобългарски паметници*. София 1979, 154–155. Cf. above, note 33.

⁵⁰ Constantinus Porphyrogenitus. *De cerimoniis aulae byzantinae libri duo*. Rec. I. Reiske. Bonn, 1829, II: 661.

⁵¹ Constantine Porphyrogenitus. *De Administrando Imperio*, I (Moravcsik – Jenkins), cap. 13. 25, 66–67.

presumably Byzantine robes of state.⁵² The earliest evidence of that practice is provided by Theophanes Confessor. He writes that in 812 the Bulgarian ruler Krum strove to get a renewal of the Byzantine-Bulgarian treaty of 716 but the Byzantines refused to negotiate. Theophanes then offers a summary of the treaty of 716, which – according to him – had been concluded by the Bulgarian ruler Kormesios and Emperor Theodosius III (715–717).⁵³ In modern historiography, the nature of the 716 treaty has been the subject of debate: did it contain clauses regulating the bilateral trade or did it simply postulate that the Byzantines should henceforth be paying tribute to the Bulgarians?⁵⁴ Whatever the case, the important thing is that at the beginning of the eighth century, the Bulgarians began to receive Byzantine silk fabrics and red leather for (imperial-style) boots on a regular basis.

In the wake of Bulgaria's conversion to Christianity in the mid-860s, the Bulgarian court began to adopt elements of the Byzantine court ceremonial, along with the appropriate attire and trappings of power. But it took some time before the Byzantine court mores were fully adopted in Bulgaria: having started under Boris Michael (855–882), this process must have gained momentum under Boris' Byzantine-educated son, Symeon (893–927), in order to be completed under Boris' grandson, Peter (927–969). It was Peter's marriage in 927 to a Byzantine princess, Maria-Irene Lecapena,⁵⁵ and the formal recognition by the Empire of Peter as "*basileus of the Bulgarians*" that account for the full-scale Byzantinization of the Bulgarian court.

⁵² On the introduction of Byzantine ceremonial attire into the Bulgarian court, see В. Тъпкова-Займова. „Към въпроса за византийското влияние върху българското облекло през Първата българска държава.” In: *Известия на института за българска история*, I – П.София 1951, 298–305.

⁵³ *Theophanis Chronographia* (de Boor), I: 497. Cf. *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor* (trans. Mango – Scott), 681. Some scholars tend to believe that the Bulgarian ruler who concluded the treaty of 716 was not Kormesios but Tervel.

⁵⁴ N. Oikonomides. “Tribute or Trade? The Byzantine-Bulgarian Treaty of 716.” In: *Studies on the Slavo-Byzantine and West-European Middle Ages. In Memoriam I. Dujčev*. Sofia 1988, I: 29–31. On the discussion concerning the nature of that treaty, see Г.Г. Литаврин. „К дискуссии о договоре 716 г. между Византией и Болгарией.” In: *Idem. Византия и славяне. Сборник статей*. Санкт-Петербург 1999, 229–236.

⁵⁵ J. Shepard. “A Marriage Too Far? Maria Lekapena and Peter of Bulgaria.” In: *The Empress Theophano. Byzantium and the West at the Turn of the First Millennium*. Ed. by A. Davids. Cambridge 1995, 121–149.

The seals of Symeon and Peter represent them in Byzantine-style ceremonial attire.⁵⁶ But Peter’s two brothers, John and Benjamin, are said to have been wearing some traditional Bulgarian costume, in an attempt to show their opposition to the increasing Byzantine influence at Peter’s court.⁵⁷ Even under Peter and his Byzantine wife, however, the Bulgarian court ceremonial does not seem to have become as elaborate as its Byzantine prototype. There is no evidence that all the Byzantine court titles along with the appropriate costumes that are listed by Constantine Porphyrogenitus in his *Book of Ceremonies*⁵⁸ were ever introduced into the tenth-century Bulgarian court.

Still, there is sufficient evidence that the Bulgarian Christian rulers Boris, Symeon and Peter opted for the Byzantine-style ceremonial attire, at least on formal occasions. In the illuminated manuscripts, whether Byzantine or Slavonic, there are a number of scenes with ninth- and tenth-century Christian Bulgarian rulers in them. For example, in a thirteenth-century Russian copy of Constantine of Preslav’s *Edifying Gospel*,⁵⁹ there is a full-length “portrait” of Boris Michael in imperial regalia. Constantine of Preslav was a contemporary of Boris’ son, Symeon, but the original of his work has been lost; there is no way of telling whether the Russian copy presents a truthful “portrait” of Boris-Michael or not.

It is almost certain, however, that Boris’ Byzantine-educated son, Symeon of Bulgaria, took to wearing Byzantine-style clothes as soon as he ascended the Bulgarian throne: Symeon’s “portrait” on his early seals testifies to that. Also, on some of Simeon’s later seals there is the title of “*basileus*” or “*basileus of the Romans and the Bulgarians*”— a reflection of Simeon’s claims to the imperial throne of Constantinople. In a miniature in the Madrid Skylitzes, Simeon of Bulgaria is dressed as a “Roman” emperor.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Н. Мушмов. *Монетите и печатите на българските царе*. София 1924; И. Йорданов. *Корпус на монетите и печатите на средновековна България*. София 2001.

⁵⁷ Theophanes Continuatus, *Chronographia*. Rec. I. Bekker. Bonn 1838, 195.

⁵⁸ See the list of imperial costumes in E. Piltz. “Middle Byzantine Court Costume.” In: *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*. Ed. H. Maguire. Washington, D. C. 1997, 39–51, esp. pp. 42–44. Also, see the list of the court costumes, in *ibid.*, pp. 44–46.

⁵⁹ Антоний, архиепископ Вадковский, *Константин, епископ болгарский и его Учительное евангелие*. Казань 1885. See its translation into Bulgarian in *Периодическо списание на Българското книжовно дружество*, 21–22 (1887), 373–425.

⁶⁰ C. Estopañan. *Skylitzes Matritensis* I: fol. 148.

Throughout most of the tenth century, the Bulgarian rulers and high-ranking aristocrats continued to rely primarily on diplomatic gifts and the payment of tribute by the Byzantines for the supply of high-quality silks. In 922/23, in an attempt to end the bitter Byzantine-Bulgarian conflict, Patriarch Nicholas Mystikos offered, on behalf of the imperial government, to cede to Simeon a portion of land and to send to him gold, silver and “*gifts of other things such as will rejoice the Bulgarians,*” in exchange for peace.⁶¹ Maybe, those other things that rejoiced the Bulgarians were high-quality silks, luxury objects, spices and exotic foodstuffs. In any event, this was a lucrative offer, which – according to the patriarch – no sensible prince would turn down.

However, the Byzantine silken fabrics that came to Bulgaria as gifts and tribute could not satisfy the growing demand of silk in the tenth-century Bulgarian society. As I have already mentioned, relatively inexpensive silk fabrics were supplied by the Bulgarian merchants who regularly traveled to Constantinople, to purchase silk fabrics and a variety of haberdashery items of mostly Syrian origin.⁶² Those cheap and narrow silk fabrics, however, could not be used for making fancy *skaramangia* and *chlamides*, that is, the type of ceremonial attire which was required of high-ranking visitors to the imperial court in Constantinople.

In the middle Byzantine period, the court theater of Byzantium mirrored the harmony of the universe and its role was to appear magnificent and to impress the emperor’s subjects.⁶³ Because high-ranking foreign visitors to the imperial court were assimilated to one class of Byzantine dignitaries or another, they too had to partake of the court theater by showing up at the banquets and ceremonies in the proper dress code. The envoys from the Bulgarians and the Arabs were assimilated, according to the tenth-century Byzantine court protocol, to the highest imperial rank of patricians.⁶⁴ For this reason, they had to appear before the Byzantine emperor wearing clothes that were appropriate of their rank.

⁶¹ Nich. Myst., Ep. 25.84-100. In: *Nicholas I Patriarch of Constantinople. Letters*. Greek text and English trans. by R. Jenkins and L. Westerink. Washington, D. C. 1972, 176.

⁶² *Book of the Eparch IX*. 6. In: *Византийская книга эпарха (перев. Сюсюмова)*, 59. Cf. above, note 28.

⁶³ E. Piltz. “Middle Byzantine Court Costume”, 40.

⁶⁴ N. Oikonomidès. *Les listes des préséance Byzantines des IXe et Xe siècles*. Paris 1972, 163.14-17, 163.18 – 165.4.

As can be seen from the *Kletorologion* of Philotheos, “the two important Bulgarian friends” who routinely visited Constantinople twice a year came to the imperial palace in *skaramangia*, *chlamydes* and embroidered sandals of their own.⁶⁵ This attire accounts for the patrician’s ceremonial costume; only twelve people in the Byzantine Empire – and, theoretically, in the entire world – were entitled to wearing it. Also, during the Christmas and Easter banquets in the imperial palace, the patrician’s rank entitled the two high-ranking Bulgarians and their Byzantine fellow dignitaries to the exclusive right of being seated at the emperor’s table, in an enactment of the Twelve-Apostles-and-Jesus scene.⁶⁶ The low-ranking members of the Bulgarian delegation, on the other hand, came to the imperial banquets wearing their ethnic costume and were seated at a remote table in the dining hall.⁶⁷ On the other hand, the tenth-century Muslim envoys to the Byzantine court did not have *skaramangia* of their own, which is why, before dining with the emperor, they were asked to change into the appropriate type of clothes. These clothes were supplied by the Byzantine palace.⁶⁸

Under exceptional circumstances, a high-ranking foreign visitor could come to the imperial palace in clothes that did not meet the strict requirements of the Byzantine court protocol. Thus, on the Day of the Holy Apostles in 968, the Bulgarian envoy came to the palace looking totally barbaric, according to Liudprand of Cremona: the Bulgarian had his hair cut in Hungarian fashion, was girt about with a brazen chain, and had the overall appearance of a catechumen. Nevertheless, at the banquet, the Bulgarian was given precedence over the envoy of Otto the Great, Liudprand, who took this as an insult. The bishop of Cremona was then told that the Bulgarians were given precedence, at the Byzantine court, over all other envoys, because of the bilateral agreement reached when the Bulgarian king Peter married a Byzantine princess (927).⁶⁹

In actual fact, the decision of the Byzantine government to assimilate the Bulgarian ambassadors to Constantinople to the rank of imperial patricians

⁶⁵ Ibid., 209.11.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 167.10–18.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 203.30–31.

⁶⁸ Const. Porph., *De cerim.*, XV (ed. Reiske), 580. Cf. J. Featherstone, “Ol’ga’s Visit to Constantinople.” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 14/3–4 (1990), 300.

⁶⁹ Liudprand. *Legatio* 19, in *Liudprandi Cremonensis Opera omnia*. Cura et studio P. Chiesa. Turnholt 1998, 105–106.

predates Peter's marriage to Maria Lecapena. It can be traced back to the late 890s and has found reflection in Philotheos' work, which was published in 899.⁷⁰ While the privileged status of the Bulgarian ambassadors to the imperial court may have been suspended during the Byzantine-Bulgarian conflict that broke out in 912 and lasted for almost fifteen years, it seems to have been renewed with the signature of the peace treaty of 927. Its validity remained uncontested for nearly forty years, until 965, when Emperor Nicephorus II Phocas (963–969) decided to break off relations with Bulgaria.⁷¹ Three years later, however, the Russian invasion of the Balkans presented a common threat to the Bulgarians and the Byzantines, and made them seek a renewal of their diplomatic relations. For this reason, in 968 a Bulgarian ambassador was speedily dispatched to Constantinople, only this time he was not dressed up as an imperial dignitary but was symbolically wearing a different type of clothes.

The Studded Belt – an Utilitarian Accessory and a Status Symbol

In the language of symbols, the belt stood for valor, virtue, and chastity. It was also an important accessory to one's clothes. At the same time, it had an important utilitarian function because it carried the purse, dagger, sword, and other personal belongings of the wearer. Studded belts often displayed skillful craftsmanship. In addition, they carried important information about the wearer's social status and his rank in the military or in the court hierarchy. Belt buckles often served as amulets as they were expected to be able to ward off evil.

As we have seen, caftans were usually fastened by belts. More often than not, those were decorated belts. It is in this context that we should consider the "brazen chain" (*aenea catena*) which the Bulgarian envoy of 968 is said to have been wearing. This may have been a leather belt studded with bronze appliqué. Archaeology has provided ample evidence of what Bulgarian men's belts of the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries looked like. Belt pieces – buckles, belt tips and stiffeners, and appliqué – have been extensively studied by archaeologists and art historians, which is why here I am not going

⁷⁰ N. Oikonomidès, *Les listes des préséance Byzantines*, 81–235.

⁷¹ L. Simeonova, "The Short Fuse: Examples of Diplomatic Abuse in Byzantine and Bulgarian History." *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 23 (1996), 55–74, see esp. 60–61.

to discuss them at length.⁷² Suffice it to say that some of the said belt pieces are made from precious metals (gold or silver alloy) while others are made from gilded bronze, silver-covered bronze and – only rarely – silver-covered copper, to imitate gold and silver.

The design of the various belt pieces has been the subject of debate among scholars: do the eighth-, ninth- and tenth-century belt pieces that have been found in Bulgaria point at traditions of Central Asia and/or the Russian steppe, or do they refer us to contemporary Byzantine artistic styles? But most scholars seem to agree that, whatever the case, the stylized animals and phantasmagoric creatures in the belt buckles, i.e., griffins, lions, or animals chasing each other, could ultimately be traced out to the influence which Sassanid Persia had exerted on its neighbors in Late Antiquity. The majority of the belt buckles with stylized animals on them that were found in Bulgaria were, most probably, produced by Byzantine workshops, as the latter were eager to satisfy the tastes of the barbarous "Scythian" people living to the north of the Empire. In some cases, the "buckle" animals represent allegories of human qualities: for example, the griffin and the lion stand for manhood, strength, and power. Some of the phantasmagoric "buckle" creatures – winged horses, lions, griffins, etc. – seem to have also served as amulets, to ward off evil.⁷³

It is worth noting that the majority of the ninth- and tenth-century belt pieces found in northeastern Bulgaria are made of bronze, gilded or with a silver covering; very few of them are made of a silver alloy or lead. Although

⁷² On the appliqués of studded belts that were found in late antique and early medieval sites in Bulgaria, see С. Станилов. „Старобългарски ремъчни украси от Националния археологически музей.“ *Разкопки и проучвания*, 22 (1991), 5–70; Idem, „Паметници на металопластиката VII – IX в. в България.“ In: *Проблеми на прабългарската история и култура*. София 1991, II: 181–197; С. Станилов – Г. Атанасов. „Старобългарски украси за колани от Шуменския музей.“ *Археология*, 35 (1993), 1, 43–53. On the semantics of the human faces on belt appliqués and belt tips, see Р. Рашев. „За езическия лицев образ (по повод на някои коланни украси).“ In: *Сборник в памет на проф. С. Ваклинов*. София 1984, 129–135. On the technology of the belt-pieces production, see Л. Петкова-Дончева. „Два модела за коланни апликации.“ In: *Приноси към българската археология*, София, 1992, I: 210–213. For a survey study of the early medieval belt tips in the Archaeological Museum of Varna, see В. Плетньов – В. Павлова. „Ранносредновековни ремъчни крайници във Варненския археологически музей.“ *Bulletin de Musée national de Varna*, 28 (1992), 219–223.

⁷³ V. Pletnyov. "Buckles with Animal Images from Northeast Bulgaria, 9th – 10th Centuries." *Archaeologia bulgarica*, 9 (2005), 1, 75–86.

they may vary in shape, typology-wise the belt pieces belong to the three basic types of belt appliquéés that cover a vast area, stretching from Siberia to the Middle Danube.⁷⁴

As is noted by A. Dines, in the ninth and tenth centuries, among the Bulgarians, the Vikings, the Magyars and a number of eastern peoples it was fashionable to have a long belt decorated with a belt buckle, appliquéés, and a single belt tip.⁷⁵ For the nomads, the wearing of a decorated belt, regardless of what variety its appliquéés belonged to, was not only a matter of personal taste, or fashion; the belt was a sign of its wearer's social standing. Also, the number and shape of the appliquéés on one's studded belt were indicative of the wearer's rank in the military.⁷⁶ Albeit rarely, decorated belts are also to be found in women's and children's graves.⁷⁷

In all probability, it was the Huns in Late Antiquity that passed on to the nomadic and to the settled peoples of Eurasia the idea that a studded belt could have two functions at the same time – a utilitarian and representative. The idea of the dual function of the decorated belt seems to have originated in China where the number of appliquéés on one's belt was indicative of the social status of the belt wearer.⁷⁸ The sixth-century Byzantine historian, Procopius of Caesarea, writes that no one in Persia could wear a gold ring, a belt, a buckle, or any other accessory without their ruler's special permission to do so.⁷⁹

In the sixth through the eighth centuries, the Central Asian Turks displayed a similar attitude toward their decorated belts, as could be seen from the surviving runic epitaphs. In his lifetime, the diseased may have been

⁷⁴ For a typological survey of the belt appliquéés in the Varna Archaeological Museum, see В. Плетньов – В. Павлова. "Ранносредновековни ремъчни апликации във Варненския археологически музей." *Bulletin de Musée national de Varna*, 30–31 (1994–1995), 24–191.

⁷⁵ I. Dienes. "A karancslapújtői honfoglalás kori őv és, mordvinfolkdi hasomása." *Archaeologiai értesítő*, 91 (1964), 1, 39–40.

⁷⁶ On the studded belts that have been found in warriors' graves in Eastern Europe, see the bibliography cited in В. Плетньов – В. Павлова, "Ранносредновековни ремъчни апликации ...", 99, n. 561.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 99, n. 562: bibliography.

⁷⁸ С. Руденко. *Культура гуннов и ноинулинские курганы*. Москва 1962, 44.

⁷⁹ В. Распопова. *Металлические изделия раннесредневекового Согда*. Ленинград 1980, 90.

granted the privilege of wearing a certain type of a belt buckle and to have as many as forty-two different pieces attached to his leather belt: the belt buckle along with the other belt pieces were indicative of the man's military virtue or high position at the court.⁸⁰ In fact, the practice of adding extra pieces to one's belt as a reflection of that person's rise through the ranks of a hierarchy seems to have been widely popular among the nomadic peoples.⁸¹

As a rule, the type of metal from which the belt pieces were made – gold, silver, bronze, copper, or lead – as well as their ornament was indicative of the man's rank and social status.⁸² The same rule generally applied to the metal pieces that were used for the decoration of other types of leather stripes, i.e., the ones that were attached to various parts of the clothes, the shoes, the bag, or the harness of the horse⁸³.

From the eighth century onward, in all parts of Eastern Europe as well as in the North Caucasus region, the fancy belt pieces made of precious metals and displaying fine craftsmanship became quite rare, while the numbers of cheap belt pieces increased sharply. Studded belts seemed to be quickly losing their elitist nature, turning into a more or less generic accessory to men's clothing. In ninth- and tenth-century Bulgaria, for example, studded belts seemed to have been worn by all army people, regardless of their military rank or social status.⁸⁴

But even if, studded belts were quickly turning into a generic type of product in the ninth century, their quality varied and some were fancier than others. The finds in a stone sarcophagus in the rich people's burial grounds of Pliska testify to that. In the sarcophagus there was found a well-preserved

⁸⁰ В. Распопова. Поясной набор Согда VI – VIII вв." *Советская археология*, 4 (1965) 90, notes 68 and 69.

⁸¹ С. Плетнева. "От кочевий к городам." *Материалы и исследования по археологии СССР*, 142 (1967), 162–166.

⁸² С. Станилов, "Старобългарски ремъчни украси ...", 32–33.

⁸³ In some illuminated manuscripts, such as the *Manasses' Chronicle* and the *Madrid Scylitzes*, there are miniatures with Bulgarian riders whose horse harnesses are decorated with appliqué: cf. И. Дуйчев. *Миниатюрите на Манасиевата летопис*. София 1962, fols. 145, 146; А. Божков. *Миниатюри от Мадридския ръкопис на Йоан Скилица*, fols. 11v, 18 v.

⁸⁴ В. Плетньов – В. Павлова. "Ранносредновековни ремъчни апликации ...", 100, ns. 567–569..

leather belt with a gold buckle and gold appliqués, and an ornamented knife suspended from it. A Greek inscription on the sarcophagus lid informs us that the diseased had been granted the Byzantine court title of *candidatus* in his lifetime while belonging to the inner circle of dignitaries at Omurtag's court.⁸⁵

There were two categories of dignitaries at the Bulgarian ruler's court: "those of the inner circle" (*hoi eso boilades*) and "those of the outer circle" (*hoi exo boilades*).⁸⁶ The surviving sources, however, do not provide evidence of the differences, if there were any, between the clothing of the inner-circle dignitaries and that of their fellow-dignitaries of the outer circle on the other. If the ninth- and tenth-century Bulgarians continued to abide by the traditions of their nomadic ancestors, a man's rise through the ranks of the hierarchy might have found reflection in the adding-up of extra pieces to his studded belt. This, in turn, would have resulted in the emergence of a variegated pattern of belt decoration.

The symbolic significance of men's studded belts in ninth- and tenth-century Bulgaria may have been easier to decipher had all the known belt pieces been found in necropolises, i.e., in graves in which the man was buried with his belt. However, unlike the Avars in the eighth and ninth centuries⁸⁷ and the Cumans in the fourteenth,⁸⁸ the Proto-Bulgarians did not have the custom of burying people in their warrior's outfit and with a lot of burial gifts. As a rule, what one finds in a Proto-Bulgarian's grave is ceramics; only rarely does the burial inventory include pieces of armor, weapons or metal appliqués that had been attached to leather straps.⁸⁹ This ancient custom seems to have survived in Bulgaria at least until the end of the tenth century. We may surmise then

⁸⁵ V. Beševliev. "Eine neue protobulgarische Inschrift." *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 62 (1972), S. 62 sqq.

⁸⁶ Const. Porph. *De cerim.* (ed. Reiske), 581.

⁸⁷ On the gifts that were found in 8th- and 9th-century Avar burial grounds in Hungary, see N. Fettich. "Das awarenzeitliche Gräberfeld von Pilismarot-Basacharc." *Studia Archaeologica* 3 (1965), S. 106 sqq; G. Kiss. "Funde der Awarenzeit aus Ungarn in Wienermuseen, 2." *Archeologia Austriaca*, 69 (1986), Taf. 1 sqq.

⁸⁸ N. Berend. *At the Gate of Constantinople*, 256 sqq.

⁸⁹ В. Плетньов – В. Павлова. „Ранносредновековни ремъчни апликации ...“, 101. There are only three cases in which all the belt pieces of a certain find seem to have belonged to the same studded belt. These are the above-mentioned gold buckle and gold appliqués from the stone sarcophagus in Pliska and the two well-known sets of belt pieces from Madara. On the two ninth-century appliqué sets from Madara, see С. Ваклинов. *Формиране на старобългарската култура*. София 1977, 142–145.

that, in eighth-, ninth- and even tenth-century Bulgaria, studded belts and other relatively expensive things may have been passed on from father to son rather, than buried in graves; when, eventually, the studded belt was stripped of its precious-metal decorations, the belt pieces (i.e., the buckle, belt-tip, and appliques) may have been hoarded as a treasure (Fig. 5).⁹⁰

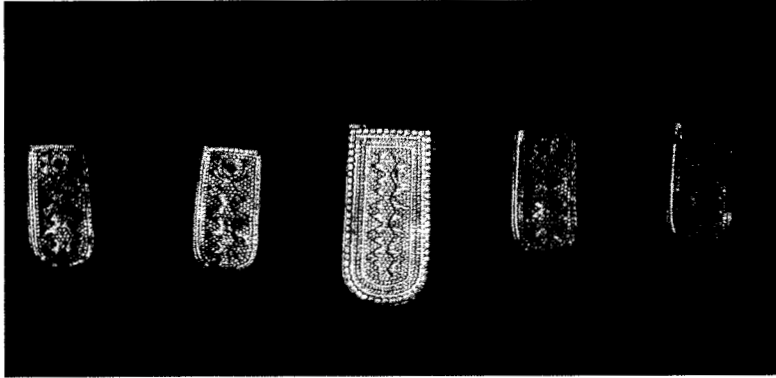


Figure 5. *Gold belt-tips*, 9th century, Madara
(Sofia, National Historical Museum, permanent exhibition)

There are exceptions to the rule, of course. In what is nowadays Northeastern Bulgaria, there are a few known sites, in which men were laid to rest with their studded belts. However, those belts seem to have been “deactivated” prior to the burial of the deceased, in a ritual that amounted to a symbolic disarmament of the dead warrior. The Proto-Bulgarians seemed to have brought that custom from their old country in the Russian steppe.⁹¹ Thus, in mass grave No. 80 at Kjulevča, in the district of Šumen, one person who had been buried with his studded belt was found. The belt was not richly decorated; more importantly, prior to that man’s burial it seems to have been torn to pieces, i.e., “deactivated.”⁹² Also, in one of the graves in the necropolis

⁹⁰ See, for example, the finds from Sredishte, in the district of Silistria: Г. Атанасов. „Средновековна коланна гарнитура от с. Средище, Силистренско.“ In: *Добруджа*. София 1985, II: Table 1.

⁹¹ On the ancient Bulgarian custom of ritualistic disarmament of the deceased warrior, see Д.И. Димитров. „Погребалният обряд при раннобългарските некрополи във Варненско (VII – IX в.).“ *Известия на археологическия институт*, 34 (1974), 51–92.

⁹² Р. Рашев. „Българските колани през VIII – IX в.“ *Годишник на Народния археологически музей – София*, 8 (1992), 244–276.

near the village of Karamanite, in the district of Varna, the bronze buckle of the diseased man's belt had been disassembled before the man was buried.⁹³

Last but not least, when analyzing the symbolic significance of studded belts, one should also consider the talismanic functions of belt pieces. Even upon their formal conversion to Christianity, Bulgarians seem to have continued to believe in the magical functions of amulets. There are certain appliqué ornaments and, above all, certain animal images on belt buckles and belt tips that seem to have served as amulets capable of breaking spells and warding off evil. In the tenth century, certain phantasmagoric creatures such as, for example, the eagle-headed griffin, seem to have become widely popular not just in Bulgaria but in the whole of Eastern and Central Europe as well.⁹⁴ Some scholars tend to attribute this phenomenon to the growing influence of contemporary Byzantine art which, for its part, was characterized by a revived interest in the art of Antiquity, with its characteristic spirituality.⁹⁵

Finally, it is worth noting that all leather strap appliqués and belt tips that can be attributed to the pagan period of Bulgaria's history (i. e., the late seventh through the mid-ninth centuries) belong to the so-called Avar types, while the appliqués and belt tips of the next period (i. e., the mid-ninth through the early eleventh centuries) belong to a different style, which is variously referred to as being "post-Sassanid," or "second Hungarian," or "Khazar," or "Bulgarian."⁹⁶ For comprehensible reasons, I will not dwell on the discussion whether that new style was introduced into Bulgaria by the Magyars or conversely, the Magyars borrowed it from the Bulgarians, in the late 800s.⁹⁷

The long and uninterrupted tradition of wearing studded belts, whether imported or made locally,⁹⁸ by Bulgarian men exemplifies the continuity in Bulgarian men's clothes fashion, in the pagan as well as in the Christian

⁹³ Р. Рашев. „Ранносредновековна тока от Караманите.“ *Археология*, 32 (1990), 4, 56–60.

⁹⁴ В. Плетньов – В. Павлова. „Ранносредновековни ремъчни апликации ...“, 166, ns. 72–76: cited bibliography. Cf. *ibid.*, 112, ns. 641–644.

⁹⁵ А. Банк. *Прикладное искусство IX – XII вв.* Москва 1978, 6.

⁹⁶ В. Плетньов – В. Павлова, „Ранносредновековни ремъчни апликации ...“, 194, ns. 280 and 281: cited bibliography.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 113, notes 645 – 650.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 101 – 102, notes 582–588: bibliography on the bronze-casting, metal-working and goldsmiths' workshops in tenth- and eleventh-century Bulgaria.

period of the First Bulgarian Kingdom. Although very little is known of the public representation of the elite male in the later ninth- and the tenth-century Bulgarian society, one could safely assume that richly decorated belts continued to be seen as markers of virtues that were specifically deemed masculine in societies with a nomadic or semi-nomadic past (Fig. 6).

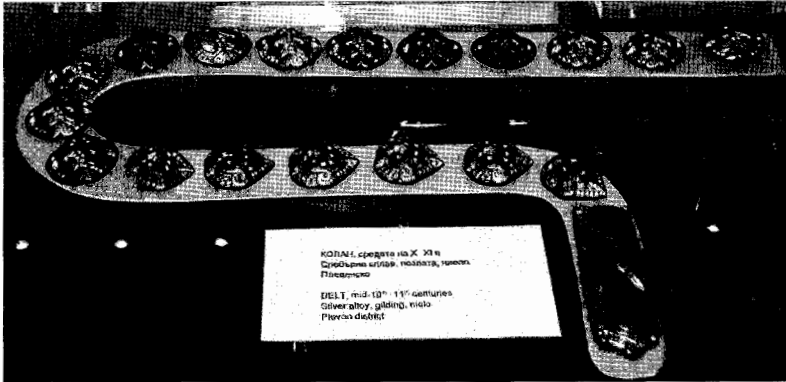


Figure 6. Gilded silver alloy belt decorations, tenth-eleventh centuries, the district of Plevna (Sofia, National Historical Museum, permanent exposition)

As for the symbolic meaning of the Bulgarian ambassador’s *aenea catena* in AD 968, it may have appeared strange to Liudprand, but it could easily be deciphered by the Byzantines who understood the “barbaric” signs that signaled status, rank, ethnicity, and military virtue.

While the “Avar-style” attire may have remained unchanged over a long period of time, the introduction of the Byzantine-style clothes into Bulgarian society may have been seen by the Bulgarian population as a sign of novelty, foreignness and even animosity. Thus, in 976, at the Byzantine-Bulgarian border, a Bulgarian sentry who mistook him for a “Roman” shot and killed Boris II – the deposed Bulgarian ruler who was fleeing from Byzantine captivity. The reason for that tragic mistake was that the fugitive was wearing “Roman clothes.”⁹⁹ On the other hand, in 1040, another Bulgarian nobleman, Alousian, managed to escape from his exile in Byzantium by dressing in Armenian clothing, thereby going

⁹⁹ *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis historiarum*. Rec. I. Thurn. Berlin 1973, 275

unnoticed.¹⁰⁰ Obviously, in Byzantium the Armenian ethnic costume was seen as attire worn by servants, rather than by their Romanized masters.¹⁰¹

As I have shown elsewhere, due to the symbolism that was encoded of it, dress drew a clear demarcation line between the people of high social status and the commonality, the military and the civilians, the clergy and the laymen. In Byzantium, dress also drew a demarcation line between the foreigners and the representatives of the minorities, on the one hand, and the Greek-speaking populace of the Byzantine cities, on the other.¹⁰² As for the Byzantine court costume, in Constantinople it was seen as a sign of its wearer's formal belonging to Byzantine court hierarchy.

Probably the two basic types of male clothing, i.e., the formal Byzantine court costume and the caftan-and-conical-hat attire whose main accessory was the long studded belt, remained in parallel use in Bulgaria at least until the early 1000s. That parallel use of two different types of men's attire may have been a reflection of the simmering conflict between the representatives of two rival ideologies: the pro- and the anti-Byzantine factions, at the Bulgarian court. It is also possible that the same people may have opted for the "Avar-style" attire on one occasion and a *skaramangion* and a *chlamys* on another, in order to underscore the ideological symbolism of their actions. In that case, the duality in the Bulgarian aristocracy's manner of dressing testified to the ambivalent nature of the Byzantine-Bulgarian relations, in which the common allegiance to Byzantine Christianity and civilization could not eliminate the old military antagonism between the ruling elites of the two nations.

¹⁰⁰ Scylitzes (rec. Thurn), 413.

¹⁰¹ N. Garsoïan. "The Problem of Armenian Integration into the Byzantine Empire," 102–103.

¹⁰² See above, note 2.

THE PERCEPTION OF THE BULGARIAN PAST IN THE COURT OF PRESLAV AROUND 900 AD

Angel Nikolov

In his *Hexameron*, compiled around the beginning of the tenth century and dedicated to the Bulgarian Prince Symeon (893-827), John the Exarch adapted part of St. Basil the Great's *Hexameron*¹ and presented the Bulgarian tradition about the exclusive right to power of the representatives of the ruling dynasty in the following way:

In many countries rulers – emperors, princes, and kings – take power... by right of birth according to the law, order of progeny, and kinship. The son replaces the father and the brother [replaces] his brother; so it was at the time of David as well. He was the first of his family to rule Judaea and his family continued [to rule] it right until the reign of Zorobabel. It was the same with the Persians, and with the Lydians. With the former, beginning with Cyrus and Darius, their family kept ruling right until the last. While with the Lydians [one family ruled] from Candaules right until Gyges, and again from Gyges right until Croesus, when the imperial power was kept by only one family. Originally, it was the same with the Bulgarians – princes ascended the throne by right of birth: the son succeeded his father, and the brother succeeded his brother. We hear that it is the same with the Chazars.²

¹ A literal translation of St Basil the Great's words was also included in John the Exarch's *Hexameron*: R. Aitzetmüller. *Das Hexameron des Exarchen Johannes*, 6. Graz 1979, 131. 12–333. 12 (152a-b).

² Aitzetmüller, *Das Hexameron*, 6, 241. 14–245. 1 (140a – 140c). This text has been analyzed by many researchers: Ю. Трифонов. „Сведения из старобългарския живот в Шестоднева на Иоана Екзарха“. *Списание на БАН*, 35. *Клон историко-филологичен и философско-обществен*, 19 (1926), 13–6; В. Бешевлиев. *Първобългарите. Бит и культу-*

As is evident from the text, John the Exarch preferred to present the Bulgarians as following political traditions that dated back to God's chosen king of Judaea, David, and to the ancient kingdoms of Lydia and Persia, without even mentioning Byzantium.³ Some scholars have suggested that the alleged Bulgarian practice of passing the right to rule within the ruling family, not only from father to son but also from brother to brother, should be attributed to a "new principle of succession," set forth at the assembly held in 893, which endorsed the accession to the throne of Symeon I (893–927) after the dethronement of his older brother Vladimir Rasate (889–893).⁴ I would argue that John the Exarch's real purpose was to demonstrate the affinity between the Bulgarian political practice of succession to the throne and the dynastic traditions of prominent ancient peoples, thereby emphasizing the legitimacy of his master as a ruler of the Bulgarians in the context of the strained relations between Bulgaria and Byzantium in the late ninth and the early tenth centuries.⁵

ра. София 1981, 44–5; Ц. Чолова. „Върховната власт и управлението в средновековната българска държава по времето на Симеон, отразени в „Шестоднева“ на Йоан Екзарх“. *Известия на Института за история*, 28 (1985), 226–9; Й. Андреев. „Йоан Екзарх и някои въпроси във връзка с наследяването на царската власт в средновековна България“. In: *Преславска книжовна школа*, 1. София 1995, 308–16; Г. Николов. „Прабългарската традиция в християнския двор на средновековна България (IX – XI в.)“. In: *Бог и цар в българската история*. Пловдив 1996, 124–30. Here the reference to the Chazars may bear a relationship to the *Vita of St. Constantine–Cyril the Philosopher*, where the writer recounts a conversation between the saint and one of the Chazar kagan's retinue, revolving around the idea that the power over the Romans can go from one family to another by the will of God, depending on the personal piety of the emperor. See, Климент Охридски. *Съчинения*, 3. *Пространни жития на Кирил и Методий*. Подготвили за печат Б. Ангелов и Хр. Кодов. София 1973, 96. Probably under the influence of this passage in the *Vita*, around the middle of the eleventh century Hilarion, the Archbishop of Kiev, used the title of "kagan" in reference to Prince Vladimir, the ruler under whom the Rus' converted: J.-P. Arrignon. "Remarques sur le titre de kagan attribué aux princes russes d'après les sources occidentales et russes des IXe – XIe s." *Зборник Радова Византолошког Института*, 23 (1984), 67–8. See also: G. Dagron. *Emperor and Priest. The Imperial Office in Byzantium*. Cambridge 2003, 13–4.

³ A. Kazhdan, G. Constable. *People and Power in Byzantium. An Introduction to Modern Byzantine Studies*. Washington 1982, 146.

⁴ Й. Андреев. „Народните събори в политическия живот на Първата българска държава“. *Исторически преглед*, 4 (1974), 100–1; Андреев, „Йоан Екзарх“, 313; И. Божилов, В. Гюзелев. *История на средновековна България VII – XIV век*. София 1999, 225.

⁵ The importance of dynastic succession to the Bulgarian throne is confirmed by Nicholas

John the Exarch's text manifests his ambition to present the dynastic continuity of Bulgarian rulers and the observance of a precise order of succession within the ruling family as a continuation of ancient political traditions. In that respect the *Hexameron* is a typical example of the profound ideological interest in world history characteristic of the men of letters engaged at the royal court in Preslav. Inextricably linked in the collective consciousness, the history of the peoples and the history of the dynasties that ruled them symbolized the time-sanctioned right of the Bulgarians to exist as a separate national community with its own traditions, laws, and culture. Moreover, these histories legitimized the power of the Bulgarian rulers as descendants of powerful ancient rulers and as upholders of political traditions, which had come into being centuries before the establishment of Danube Bulgaria. In this sense, G. Bakalov quite justifiably states, "the Proto-Bulgarians' Turkic tradition of state organization left a long-lasting imprint, even after the Christianization of the country and the ensuing Slavization."⁶

In one of his epistles to Tsar Symeon, the patriarch Nicholas Mystikos (901-907; 912-925) stated: "God, who has given to each nation its limits, so has He given to each its honors and appellations. Those who have kept to the honors given to them by Him have endured. But those who have set at naught – as it were – the divine gifts and honors, and have persisted in trying to get something more on their own account, these, although they have appeared for a short while to advance and increase, yet after a little have been deprived of

Mystikos, who wrote to Symeon in the summer of 913 that he prayed day and night "that your posterity should never cease to rule over the nation of the Bulgarians, that your children should never fall away from the inheritance of your achievements" (Nicholas I Patriarch of Constantinople. *Letters*. Greek text and English translation by R. J. H. Jenkins and L. G. Westerink. *Corpus Fontium Historia Byzantina VI*. Washington 1973, 5. 39–43, 28). In the summer of 920, the patriarch returned to the issue by elegantly juxtaposing Symeon's claims to power over the Romans with the controversial circumstances surrounding his ascension to the Bulgarian throne in 893: "I will ask you this, and please do tell: if a brother, or one of your own sons, were to come and do all he could to seize your Majesty and the rule over your people, and were then to say, "I am doing and trying to do this in order to be at concord and peace with you," would you accept this profession of his? Or would you not by all means expel him quite out of your country as a traitor and an enemy?" (Nicholas I, Patriarch of Constantinople. *Letters*. 21. 94–99, 146).

⁶ Г. Бакалов. „Византийският културен модел в идейно-политическата структура на Първата българска държава“. *История*, 4–5 (1994), 16.

all.”⁷

However, Nicholas Mystikos only once revealed his understanding of the place assigned by God to the Bulgarians. Soon after the crushing defeat suffered by the Byzantine troops on 20 August 917 at Anchialo and fearing a possible Bulgarian offensive against Constantinople, the Patriarch reminded Symeon about the previous futile sieges of the imperial capital, focusing specifically on the failure of the Avars: “Once upon a time the Persian army came here and encamped, and burned and wrecked buildings, as you are threatening to do. But they were destroyed, and are now nothing but a memory; while the Roman Empire stands firm on its own feet. Before that, the Avar tribes, of whom you were the offshoot (I mean no disrespect), and slaves, and runaways, for long assailed this great City, that has as her Commander in Chief our Lady and Mistress of us all, up to the very walls; yet they too were destroyed, and not a vestige of that race survives, while she, our City, smiles in the imperial glory that was her lot from the beginning.”⁸

Although in this case Nicholas Mystikos alludes to the Bulgarian participation in the Avar troops that besieged Constantinople in 626, it is obvious that the patriarch also knew Patriarch Nicephorus chronicle, where the establishment of the so called “Great Bulgaria”⁹ is associated with a revolt against the domination of the Avars¹⁰ – information which is not corroborated by other historical sources.¹¹ “Reminding” Symeon about the slave origins of the Bulgarians, the patriarch in effect questioned his legitimacy, as the very emergence of the Bulgarian people was due to an unlawful act of rebellion against its former masters. Therefore, from Nicholas point of view, Symeon’s drive for imperial power over the Romans was doomed to failure not only

⁷ Nicholas I Patriarch of Constantinople. *Letters*. 8. 65–70, 48.

⁸ Nicholas I Patriarch of Constantinople. *Letters*. 10. 30–39, 70.

⁹ Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople. *Short History*. Text, translation and commentary by C. Mango. Washington, D.C. 1990, 86.

¹⁰ Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople. *Short History*, 70.

¹¹ A number of contemporary scholars believe that this is a slip on Patriarch Nicholas’ part and for “Avars” we should read Western Turks: A. Новосельцев. *Хазарское государство и его роль в истории Восточной Европы и Кавказа*. Москва 1990, 75; Божилов, Гюзелев, *op.cit.*, 74–6. Scholars who trust this evidence are: В. Бешевлиев. *Първобългари. История*. София 1984, 39, 42; P. Golden. *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples. Ethnogenesis and State-Formation in Medieval and Early Modern Eurasia and the Middle East*. Wiesbaden 1992, 244–5.

because of the providential mission of Byzantium as the only indestructible empire, created by God on earth,¹² but also because of the historically predetermined low status of the Bulgarian people.

The Patriarch's ideas are indicative of the traditional Byzantine disregard for the Bulgarians, whose early history seemed deprived of any glamour and worthiness. In contrast to the emperors from the Macedonian dynasty, who claimed to be descendants of the ancient imperial house of the Arsacids, the Bulgarian rulers were always perceived by Constantinople as newcomers and intruders,¹³ leaders of a "newly-emerged" and "abominable" nation¹⁴ of barbarians and vagabonds, who, after their conversion, would inevitably adopt the lifestyle of the Byzantines and submit to the sovereignty of the Romans.¹⁵ This view is voiced in the oration given by Emperor Nicephorus II Phocas (963–969) in 965 before the envoys of the Bulgarian tsar Peter (927–969), who had come to receive the annual tribute paid to Bulgaria by the empire. Stating that it was a disgrace for the Romans to pay tribute like slaves to "the particularly wretched and abominable Scythian people,"¹⁶ the emperor

¹² Cf. Nicholas I Patriarch of Constantinople. *Letters*. 25. 105–111, 178.

¹³ Cf. Théodore Daphnopatès. *Correspondance*. Éditée et traduite par J. Darrouzès et L. G. Westerink. Paris 1978, 6. 51, 73 ("ξένος καὶ ἀλλότριος").

¹⁴ It is significant that Theophanes Confessor describes the Bulgarians using expressions like "foul and unclean tribe," "foul tribe," "foul and newly-arisen tribe" (Theophanes *Chronographia*. Recensuit C. de Boor. Vol. I. Lipsiae, 1883, 358–9; *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor. Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284–813*. Translated with introduction and commentary by C. Mango and R. Scott. Oxford, 1997, 498–9). See also: А. Николов. „Наблюдения върху цикъла старобългарски историко-апокалиптични творби от X–XI в.” *Palaeobulgarica*, 21:1 (1997), 97; П. Ангелов. *България и българите в представите на византийците (VII – XIV век)*. София 1999, 58, 131; А. Николов. „Из византийската историческа топка: „българи – скити“, „славяни – скити““. In: *Българите в Северното Причерноморие. Изследвания и материали*, 7. Велико Търново 2000, 233–51; А. Николов. „Хан Крум във византийската традиция: страшни слухове, дезинформация и политическа пропаганда“. In: *Щрихи към балканското средновековие. Изследвания в памет на проф. Николай Кочев (= Studia Balcanica, 27)*. София 2009, 107–16.

¹⁵ Leonis imperatoris *Tactica*, XVIII. 61 (PG, T. 107, col. 960 D): "Such are the [ways] of the Turks, who are similar to the Bulgarians, the only difference being that the latter have adopted the Christian faith and have come somewhat closer to the Roman ways, shaking off along with godlessness also their savagery and the nomadic way of life".

¹⁶ Leonis Diaconi Caloënsis *Historiarum libri decem*. E recensione C. B. Hasii. Bonnae, 1828, 62. 2-3 ("ἐθνεὶ Σκυθικῶ, πενιχρῶ τε τὴν ἄλλως καὶ μιαρῶ"); *The History of Leo the Deacon. The Byzantine Military Expansion in the Tenth Century*. Introduction,

addressed his father with the following words: “Did you unawares beget me as a slave? Shall I, the revered emperor of the Romans, be reduced to paying tribute to a most wretched and abominable people?”¹⁷ Then the Bulgarian envoys were beaten up, and the emperor sent a warning to Peter, “so that you may learn, oh you who are thrice a slave through your ancestry, to proclaim the rulers of the Romans as your masters, and not to demand tribute of them as if they were slaves.”¹⁸

Conversely, by the end of the ninth century, the Bulgarians firmly believed in their historical rights over the lands conquered by their ancestors in the Balkan Peninsula. As the Persian historian Al-Tabari noted, when the Byzantines were defeated in 896 and Symeon’s troops were approaching the walls of Constantinople, the Bulgarian ruler (the tsar of the Slavs) addressed the envoys sent by Emperor Leo VI with an offer of peace, saying, “This country is my ancestors’ realm and I will not retreat until one of us has defeated the other.”¹⁹ Three decades later, in a letter to Romanus I Lecapenus, Symeon once again asserted his historical right to rule the Byzantine territories conquered by the Bulgarians in the Balkan Peninsula, writing, “you argue in your letter to us that Dorostolon [modern Silistra] and the other places mentioned in your letter were under the rule of the previous emperors, and now that you rule them, you say it should not be a burden for us as we should be used to it...”²⁰

The Bulgarian state tradition and the tenacity of the historical memory of the power and ancient origins of the Bulgarian people, cultivated by the pagan ancestors of Prince Boris-Michael (852–889; + 907) under whom the

translation and annotations by A.-M. Talbot and D. Sullivan, with the assistance of G. Dennis and S. McGrath. *Dumbarton Oaks Studies*, 41 (2005), 110. Cf. also: I. Stouraitis. “Byzantine War against Christians – an *Emphylos Polemos*?” *Byzantina Symmeikta*, 20 (2010), 105.

¹⁷ Leonis Diaconi Caloënsis *Historiarum libri*, 62. 2–3 (“ἔθνει πενεστάτω καὶ μιὰρῶ”); *The History of Leo the Deacon*, 110.

¹⁸ Leonis Diaconi Caloënsis *Historiarum libri*, 62. 7–9 (“ὡς μάθης, τριδουλος ὦν ἐκ προγόνων, δεσπότης τοὺς Ῥωμαίων ἡγεμόνας ἀνακηρύττειν, οὐχ ὡς ἀνδράποδα τούτους φόρους αἰτεῖν”); *The History of Leo the Deacon*, 110.

¹⁹ A. Vasiliev. *Byzance et les Arabes*, 2 (2). *La dynastie Macédonienne (867–959)*. Bruxelles 1950, 11–2. Cf. П. Ангелов. *Българската средновековна дипломация*. София 1988, 109–10.

²⁰ Théodore Daphnopatès. *Correspondance*, 5. 116–121, 65.

country converted, and his third son Symeon, were too powerful to simply fade or give way so easily to the Roman-Byzantine concept of world history.²¹ The Proto-Bulgarian lapidary inscriptions and the living oral history and legendary tradition were undoubtedly standard reference points in the work of the men of letters in Preslav.

Conclusive evidence for this is the fact that the only known copy of the *Name List of the Bulgarian Khans*,²² a short historical record containing the names and families of some early Bulgarian rulers, was included as an *addendum* to the Slavonic translation of the biblical *Books of Kings* found in an Old Bulgarian chronograph that was compiled towards the beginning of the tenth century, now known only in late Russian revisions.²³ Keeping in mind that *The Name List of the Bulgarian Khans* is not only a list of rulers, but also a short chronicle with profound political meaning,²⁴ it is easy to explain in the context of the ideological quest of Symeon and the writers around him why there was such an interest in this text in Preslav at the beginning of the tenth century. Placed as it was, the list of the rulers of the House of Doulo, the first dynasty of Danubian Bulgaria, related the beginning of the Bulgarian state tradition, and hence the emergence of the Bulgarians as a nation, to the

²¹ In the apt words of Dmitriy Polivjanni, the newly converted Bulgarians embraced the sacred history of humankind and its “secular continuation,” the history of kingdoms succeeding kingdoms, “but they never cut the ties with their own historical past, which was essential for the development of their national identity and state ideology.” (Д. Польшанский. „Историография в контексте культуры (На материале болгарской книжности X–XIV веков)“. In: *Историческая мысль в Византии и на средневековом Западе. Межвузовский сборник научных трудов*. Иваново 1998, 86).

²² The best-known edition of the text is: O. Pritsak. *Die Bulgarische Fürstenliste und die Sprache der Protobulgaren*. Wiesbaden 1955. For an English translation, see K. Petkov. *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria, Seventh–Fifteenth Century. The Records of a Bygone Culture*. Leiden – Boston 2008, 3-5, no. 10.

²³ Л. Горина. „Византийская и славянская хронография (существовал ли болгарский хронограф?)“. *Византия. Средиземноморье. Славянский мир*. Москва 1991, 121–9; eadem. „Проблемы „Именника болгарских ханов“ как части Еллинского летописца“. *Bulgarian Historical Review*, 1 (1995), 10–29; Д. Польшанский. „Историография“, 88–9; A. Granberg. “Transferred in Translation: Making a State in Early Bulgarian Genealogies.” In: J. Lindstedt et al., eds. *С любовью к слову. Festschrift in honour of Professor Arto Mustajoki on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday*. (*Slavica Helsingiensia*, 35). Helsinki 2008, 49–58.

²⁴ М. Каймакова. „Именник на българските ханове“ – начало на българското летописно творчество“. *Родина*, 1997, no. 1-2, 31.

events around the incursion of King Nebuchadnezzar in Judea, the conquest of Jerusalem (587 BCE), and the Babylonian captivity.²⁵

We should not forget that lists of rulers and genealogies were extremely popular in early medieval Europe.²⁶ Genealogies of barbarian kings were used as a powerful ideological means of boosting the ruler's charisma as well as affirming the dynastic traditions, which strengthened the bond between the royal power and the nation.²⁷ A typical example of the insertion of pagan elements in the official dynastic ideology is the genealogy of Symeon's eminent contemporary, the Anglo-Saxon King of Wessex, Alfred the Great (871-899), whose ancestors included none other than the Norse god Odin.²⁸

It would be appropriate in this context to recall the long-standing hypothesis according to which, in response to Boris-Michael's request to receive Christian "secular laws,"²⁹ Pope Nicholas I sent to Pliska a copy of the laws of the Langobard kings.³⁰ If this conjecture is correct, Prince

²⁵ Cf. М. Каймакамова. *Българска средновековна историопис (от края на VII до първата четвърт на XV в.)*. София 1990, 65; eadem. „Българската хронография от края на IX–XIV в. (Възникване, развитие и значение)“. In: *Общото и специфичното в балканските култури до края на XIX век. Сборник в чест на 70-годишнината на проф. В. Тъпкова-Заимова*. София 1997, 198–201; И. Билярски. „Време и вечност в Именника на българските ханове“. In: *Средновековните Балкани. Политика, религия, култура*. София 1999, 19–27.

²⁶ D. Dumville. "Kingship, Genealogies and Regnal Lists." In: P. Sawyer and I. Wood, eds. *Early Medieval Kingship*. Leeds 1977, 72–104.

²⁷ В. Ронин. „Франки, вестготы, лангобарды в VI–VIII вв.: политические аспекты самосознания“. In: *Одиссей. Человек в истории. Исследования по социальной истории и истории культуры*. Москва 1989, 68.

²⁸ Dumville, *op. cit.*, 77–9; *Alfred the Great. Asser's Life of King Alfred and other contemporary sources*. Translated with an introduction and notes by S. Keynes and M. Lapidge. London 1983, 67; A. Scharer. "The writing of history at King Alfred's court." *Early Medieval Europe*, 5:2 (1996), 177–85. For parallels between the cultural policies of King Alfred and Tsar Symeon see: V. Gjuselev. "Bulgarien und die Balkanhalbinsel in den geographischen Vorstellungen des angelsächsischen Königs Alfred der Grosse (871-901)." *Byzantinobulgarica*, 4 (1973), 91–2; П. Стефанов. „Българският цар Симеон и английският крал Алфред“. *Български векове*, 2 (2000), 43–55.

²⁹ E. Perels, ed. "Nicolai I Papae Epistolae." *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Epistolae*, 6 (*Epistolae Carolini Aevi*, 4). Berolini 1925, ep. 99, cap. XIII, 575. 10–15.

³⁰ M. Conrat. *Geschichte der Quellen und Literatur des römischen Rechts im frühen Mittelalter*, 1. Leipzig 1891, 17–8, 52; F. Dvornik. *The Photian Schism. History and Legend*.

Boris might have seen the list of rulers included in the preface of King Rothari's *Edictum* of 643, the first Langobard written law. The similarity between that list and *The Name List of the Bulgarian Khans* is obvious. Rothari listed sixteen kings who had ruled before him, giving the name of the family each one belonged to; the only ruler mentioned twice is Alboin, the one who brought his people to Italy "with the help of God."³¹

The comparison between the lists of Bulgarian and Langobard rulers suggests that the ruling elites of these two "barbarian societies," which built their states in the territories of the former Roman Empire, shared a strong urge to emphasize their own, non-Roman political traditions and maintain a non-Roman political identity.³²

In the second half of the ninth century, the Bulgarians were faced with the need to reconcile their pagan past with their new Christian identity. If in 866 Prince Boris-Michael's letters to Pope Nicholas I only alluded to his desire to have prayers to Christ on behalf of his pagan ancestors,³³ several decades later his son Symeon had *The Name List of the Bulgarian Khans* appended to the Old Bulgarian translation of the sacred text of the Bible, which shows that he had already shaken off the historical insecurities and that deep-seated feeling of uncertainty which had troubled his father.³⁴

The current state of research on the translated and original works of Old Bulgarian literature allows us to reconsider some common historiographical conceptions. Summarized by Robert Browning, the Proto-Bulgarians' perception of their own past was too confused to find

Cambridge 1948, 114. Serious objections to this hypothesis are raised by: B. Paradisi. "Il Diritto Romano nell'alto Medio Evo, le epistole di Nicola I e un'ipotesi di Conrat." In: *Collectanea Stephan Kuttner*, 1. *Studia Gratiana*, 11 (1967), 209–51. Cf. W. Ullmann. *Law and Politics in Middle Ages. An Introduction to the Sources of Medieval Political Ideas*. London 1975, 72, n.1.

³¹ Edictus Rothari. *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Leges*, 4. Hannoverae 1868, 1–2. About the edict in general, see: Dumville, *op. cit.*, 94.

³² D. Harrison. "Political Rhetoric and Political Ideology in Lombard Italy." In: W. Pohl, ed., with H. Reimitz. *Strategies of Distinction. The Construction of Ethnic Communities, 300–800*. Leiden–Boston–Köln 1998, 242–3.

³³ Nicolai I Papae Epistolae, ep. 99, cap. LXXXVIII, 596. 10–13.

³⁴ Cf. R. Sullivan. "Khan Boris and the Conversion of Bulgaria: A Case Study of the Impact of Christianity on a Barbarian Society." *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, 3 (1966), 74.

an adequate embodiment in comprehensive writings and is reflected, apart from a few Greek inscriptions, only in the mysterious *Name List of the Bulgarian Khans*. Browning states, "The traditions embodied in the *List* have certainly been tampered with in ways difficult to determine, but they have not been Christianized, not even by the kind of banal chronological linking which would have been so easy... The Bulgarians in fact took over the Byzantine picture of the past ready-made and in close detail."³⁵

However, Browning overlooks the fact that *The Name List of the Bulgarian Khans* is extant in an Old Bulgarian translation and that this translation must have been made in the time of Symeon.³⁶ Whatever Browning might have meant by "Christianized," the fact that the list of rulers appeared as an appendix to a text describing biblical events should be construed as an aspect of literary activity aimed at rethinking the most distant Bulgarian past.³⁷ That no attempt was made to correlate the dates of the Proto-Bulgarian calendar to the year of the creation of the world, the indict, or the reigns of the respective emperors, provides additional support for the opinion that *The Name List of the Bulgarian Khans*, as we know it today, appeared around the turn of the ninth century. As can be seen from the well-known marginal note of Tudor Doksov from 907,³⁸ at that time the Proto-Bulgarian calendar was still familiar and probably still in use in Preslav. Alignment between the

³⁵ R. Browning. *Byzantium and Bulgaria. A Comparative Study across the Early Medieval Frontier*. Berkeley-Los Angeles 1975, 183.

³⁶ И. Дуйчев. *Проучвания върху средновековната българска история и култура*. София 1981, 13.

³⁷ As Antoaneta Granberg plausibly argues about *The Name List of the Bulgarian Khans*: "the way of translating an older pagan text into the language of the new Christian culture, as well as the way of annexing the text into the Old Testament's books of the Kings and adding some comments in it, was the way to transfer ideas and express claims about the origin of the political power of the ruling dynasties in the Bulgarian polity" (Granberg, *op. cit.*, 52).

³⁸ А. Горский, К. Невоструев. *Описание славянских рукописей Московской Синодальной библиотеки*. Отдел II. Писания святых отцев. Часть 2. Писания догматическая и духовно-нравственная. Москва 1859, 32-3; A. Vaillant. *Discours contre les ariens de saint Athanase*. Sofia 1954, 6-7. See also: К. Попконстантинов, В. Константинова. „Към въпроса за черноризец Тудор и неговата приписка.“ *Старобългарска литература*, 15 (1984), 106-118; М. Каймакамова, *Българска средновековна историопис*, 101; Х. Трендафилов „Приписката на черноризец Тудор Доксов и първобългарската летописна традиция“. In: *Плиска – Преслав*, 5 (1992), 275-80.

Proto-Bulgarian system of chronology and the systems used in the Christian world was hardly a matter of interest for the Old Bulgarian men of letters working during Symeon's Golden Age; Omurtag's Chatalar Inscription from 822 testifies to a practice of parallel dating of events "the Bulgarian way" and "the Greek way."³⁹ The use of the Proto-Bulgarian chronological system half a century after the conversion demonstrates respect for the Bulgarian national traditions, which did not run counter to Christian perceptions and religious norms.

The Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle bears witness to the fact that, even in the eleventh century, the Bulgarians had a comparatively vivid memory of Asparuh ("Ispor Tsar"),⁴⁰ the founder of their state, which suggests that the Byzantine concept of world history was hardly adopted "ready-made and in close detail," as Browning argues.

Furthermore, when Constantine of Preslav compiled his *Histories*, he was inspired by his interest and admiration for the Bulgarian past and made sure to include in his work information about the death of emperor Nicephorus I that occurred during the emperor's campaign against Bulgaria ("he was killed in Bulgaria on 26th June").⁴¹ The writer had undoubtedly set himself the goal of making the Bulgarian people and their state part of the history of the world.⁴² It is quite impressive that the first bishop of Preslav considered it necessary to mention a historical event that was a potent symbol of the fierce clash between pagan Bulgaria and the Byzantine empire at the time of Khan Krum, the founder of the dynasty to which Boris-Michael and Symeon belonged.

Preslav writers from the late ninth and the early tenth century adopted a careful approach when deciding which Byzantine works on world history (short chronicles excepted since they were often nothing more than ordinary rulers lists) to translate into Old-Bulgarian. It is quite significant that it was John Malalas' archaic chronicle, relating the events from the creation of the

³⁹ В. Бешевлиев. *Първобългарски надписи*. София 1992, 216 (no. 57).

⁴⁰ В. Тъпкова-Займова, А. Милтенова. *Историко-апокалиптичната книжнина във Византия и в средновековна България*. София 1996, 196.

⁴¹ В. Златарски. „Най-старият исторически труд в старобългарската книжнина“. *Списание на БАН*, 27. *Клон историко-филологичен и философско-обществен*, 15 (1923), 181.

⁴² М. Каймакамова, *Българска средновековна историопис*, 67.

world to the reign of Emperor Justinian I (527–565),⁴³ that they translate.

Vladimir Istrin, who published the translation, argued that after they acquired an alphabet, the South Slavs naturally developed an interest in relating the history of Byzantium. In view of this interest, the author describes the choice of John Malalas as inappropriate and points out that Malalas' chronicle is "a history of antiquity rather than a proper history of Byzantium... the events from the Byzantine history are related in it too tersely in comparison with ancient Greek history, which is interspersed with various fabulous tales."⁴⁴

One can explain the Russian scholar's bewilderment in view of his presumption that in the early tenth century the Bulgarians had a desire to know the history of Byzantium. However, the choice to translate John Malalas' chronicle rather testifies to the Bulgarians' interest in Greek and Roman antiquity, set in the context and bearing a direct connection to the sacred events of biblical history. In his work, John Malalas united, though quite eclectically, the fabulous tales derived from ancient mythology and historiography with Christian moral admonition, "to recast the ancient history in a biblical mould."⁴⁵ With the translation of Malalas, Bulgarian society received the opportunity to appreciate the continuity of the historical process⁴⁶ uninfluenced by the ideological models characteristic of later works of Byzantine historiography.⁴⁷

As we have seen, dynastic succession was a topical issue in late tenth-century Preslav. Hence, John Malalas' work must have drawn the attention of the Bulgarian men of letters with the evidence adduced in it about kings and royal dynasties that ruled a number of ancient – and not so ancient – peoples.⁴⁸

⁴³ The text was published by Vladimir Istrin in parts and in different periodicals between 1897 and 1914 and was later reproduced with some additions by Maria Chernysheva: В. Истрин. *Хроника Иоанна Малалы в славянском переводе*. Репринтное издание материалов В. М. Истрина. Подготовка издания, вступительная статья и приложения М. И. Чернышевой. Москва 1994.

⁴⁴ В. Истрин. *Хроника Георгия Амартола в древнем славянорусском переводе*, 2. Петроград 1922, 409.

⁴⁵ И. Божилов. *Седем етюда по Средновековна история*. София 1995, 253.

⁴⁶ Каймакамова, *op. cit.*, 164–8.

⁴⁷ Cf. Дуйчев, *Проучвания*, 98.

⁴⁸ It should be noted that John Malalas' weak interest in the history of the ancient Greek *poleis* and the Roman Republic was due to his belief that monarchy is the best form of social and political organization. (Д. Буланин. *Античные традиции в древнерусской литературе XI–XVI вв.* (*Slavistische Beiträge*, 278). München 1991, 42).

Thus, the chronicle became a source of historical precedents that Symeon and his courtiers could use to justify their claims in their negotiations with Byzantium.⁴⁹ Such arguments mattered in the diplomatic relations between foreign rulers and the Byzantine Empire. In the correspondence between the Byzantine emperor Basil I and the Frankish emperor Louis II in 871, for example, according to the Byzantine emperor, the title “basileus” was fit to describe only the rulers in Constantinople. In his answer Louis II pointed out, among other things, that the rulers of most nations had borne that title and urged Basil I to satisfy himself that this is indeed so by looking at historical writings.⁵⁰ Against that background, it is very likely that when Symeon demanded that the regents of Emperor Constantine VII, still a minor at the time, recognize his new title “Basileus (of the Bulgarians),” in 913, an interesting episode in the relations between the Byzantine Empire and its eastern neighbors, related in Malalas’ chronicle, was on the mind of Preslav’s literati. According to the chronicler, in 522 the Lazian ruler Ztathius, who until then had been under the supremacy of the Persians, came to Constantinople, was granted the title “tsar” (“βασιλεὺς Λαζῶν”) by Emperor Justin I (518–527), converted to Christianity, married a Byzantine woman, and then returned to his country.⁵¹ The episode in Malalas established a direct – and thus legitimizing – precedent for Symeon’s claim.

The fifth book of Malalas’ chronicle, discussing the Trojan War, also contains a reference to the Bulgarians that must have been highly appreciated in Preslav in view of the eagerness of Symeon’s literati to assert the ancient

⁴⁹ About the role of historical arguments in Symeon’s diplomatic contacts, in general, see: Ангелов. *Българската средновековна дипломация*, 104–10 (in particular, the author puts forward the interesting hypothesis that in one of his letters to Romanus I Lecapenus, Symeon used a passage from the work of the Byzantine historian Menander).

⁵⁰ Ludovici II. *Imperatoris Epistola ad Basilium I. Imperatorem Constantinopolitanum missa*. Rec. W. Henze. *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Epistolae*, 7 (*Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, 5). Berolini 1928, 386. 31–387. 15.

⁵¹ Ioannis Malalae *Chronographia*, ex recensione L. Dindorfii. Bonnae 1831, 412. 16–413. 16; В. Истрин. „Хроника Иоанна Малалы в славянском переводе. Книги пятнадцатая–восемнадцатая и приложения”. *Сборник Отделения русского языка и словесности*, 91:2 (1914), 18. 13–26; *Летописец Еллинский и Римский*, 1. Текст. Санкт-Петербург 1999, 357. See also: E. Chrysos. “The Title ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ in Early Byzantine International Relations.” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 32 (1978), 39–40; idem. “Byzantine diplomacy, A. D. 300 – 800: means and ends.” In: J. Shepard and S. Franklin, eds. *Byzantine Diplomacy*. Aldershot 1992, 34; R. Scott. “Diplomacy in the Sixth Century: The Evidence of John Malalas.” In: Franklin Shepard. *Byzantine Diplomacy*. 159–65; *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor*, 258.

origins of the Bulgarian nation. According to Malalas, “Achilles left with the Atreidai, bringing his own army of 3,000 of the men known then as Myrmidons but known now as Bulgars.”⁵² It is worth noting that the Old Bulgarian translation of the chronicle rendered the passage as “Bulgars and Huns.”⁵³ As Malalas uses the combination “Huns and Bulgars” elsewhere in the chronicle⁵⁴ it is likely that the translation reflects more truthfully the original Byzantine Greek text, now known only through more recent and incomplete copies.⁵⁵ The evidence cited shows that as early as the beginning of the tenth century, the Bulgarians were familiar with the concept of their Hun descent, which was current among the Byzantine writers.⁵⁶ This concept tallied with the genealogical legend in *The Name List of the Bulgarian Khans* about the descent of the House of Doulo from the mysterious Avitohol, most frequently identified by modern researchers as Attila⁵⁷ (although the precise interpretation of this legend in Preslav is not known). As to why Malalas identified the Myrmidons with the Bulgarians (defined in a number of Byzantine sources as “Scythian” people⁵⁸), the explanation can undoubtedly be found in the context of the ancient concept – known to some Byzantine

⁵² Иоан. Мал., 97. 19–21 (“καὶ ἀπῆλθε μετὰ τῶν Ἀτρειδῶν ὁ αὐτὸς Ἀχιλλεύς, ἔχων ἴδιον στρατὸν τῶν λεγομένων Μυρμιδόνων τότε, νυνὶ δὲ λεγομένων Βουλγάρων”); *The Chronicle of John Malalas: A translation by E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys and R. Scott*. Melbourne 1986, 48. The idea of the “Myrmidons-Bulgars” was also referred to in the works of some later Byzantine writers. (G. Moravcsik. *Byzantinoturcica. Die byzantinischen Quellen der Geschichte der Türkvölker*. Bd. 2. Berlin 1958, 207).

⁵³ В. Истрин. „Пятая книга хроники Иоанна Малалы”. *Летопись Историко-филологического общества при Императорском Новороссийском университете*, 16. Византийско-славянский отдел, 9 (1910), 6. 3–5.

⁵⁴ Иоан. Мал., 402. 4.

⁵⁵ For example, Archimandrite Leonid made the unfounded claim that the words “now [they] are Bulgars and Huns” were added by the Bulgarian translator of the chronicle, Gregorius Presbyter. (архим. Леонид. „Древняя рукопись”. *Русский Вестник*, 201 (1889), 4, 12) Equally improbable is the hypothesis that this passage “is a later interpolation made in the time when the Bulgarians had already settled in Thessaly” (Д. Ангелов. *Образуване на българската народност*. София 1981, 341).

⁵⁶ For a survey of the sources: Moravcsik. *Byzantinoturcica*, 234.

⁵⁷ For a review of different opinions, see: М. Москов. *Именник на българските ханове (Ново тълкуване)*. София 1988, 148–75.

⁵⁸ Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, 280; Николов, „Из византийската историческа топка“, 234–6.

writers as well – of Achilles’ Scythian descent.⁵⁹

The observations presented in this paper bear evidence that the Bulgarian men of letters of the late ninth and the early tenth centuries took considerable interest in world history. Naturally, they lacked the necessary knowledge and probably did not feel the urge to create original historical works similar to the Byzantine chronicles. Their ambition was to lend credence to the ancient origins of the Bulgarian nation and reaffirm the tenacity of its state and political traditions. The preservation of those traditions consolidated the authority of the ruler and enabled Christian Bulgaria – thanks to the high degree of spiritual and cultural autonomy acquired with the adoption of the Slavonic alphabet – to shore up ideologically the political independence gained by the pagan khans in the course of their wars against Byzantium. That was why in his letter to Nicholas Mystikos, Tsar Symeon remarked with undisguised pride, “where our forefathers and fathers labored, we enjoy the fruits of their labors.”⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Leonis Diaconi Caloënsis Historiarum libri, 150. 4–8 (*The History of Leo the Deacon*, 194: “Arrian says in his *Periplous* that Achilles, son of Peleus, was a Scythian, from a small town called Myrmekion located by lake Maeotis; and that he was banished by the Scythians because of his harsh, cruel and arrogant temperament, and then went to live in Thessaly”); Лев Диякон. *История*. Москва 1988, 210–1 (n. 31–33).

⁶⁰ Nicholas I Patriarch of Constantinople, *Letters*. 25. 77–78, 176.



ST. PETER (927–969), TSAR OF THE BULGARIANS

Ivan Biliarsky

I. Tsar Peter and the Development of Orthodox Bulgaria. Realities and Historical Memory

The reign and legacy of Tsar Symeon's son, Peter (r. 927-969), are usually described in negative terms in Bulgarian historiography. After the death of the mighty Symeon, there was a period of decline that affected all spheres of Bulgarian life – its economy, politics, and culture – and affected negatively social relationships, the esteem for the Church, and the general morale. No matter how we explain that situation – either as a result of the “quickenning feudalization of the society,” or in terms of Bulgaria having fallen victim of an “incursion of Byzantine influence, which oppressed the Bulgarian morale” – the decay is associated with Tsar Peter's name. The reasons for the scholarship's verdict are clear: they have their roots in the disparaging attitudes of small nations who, in the period of integration, needed the self-confidence provided by transient military victories over undoubtedly more powerful societies. Tsar Peter was neither belligerent nor victorious, and so his memory was put in the margins of history during most of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries.

The main goal of the present study is to examine the cult of Tsar Peter, who was declared saint after his death, in the period from the tenth through the twelfth century. It aims to reveal the significance of the cult to the Bulgarian state and its political ideology.

Tsar Peter is undoubtedly one of the most significant figures in Bulgarian life and culture during the Middle Ages. This study, however, will not concern

his personality. Tsar Peter's veneration became utterly important in the centuries after his death, especially in the realm of politics, in the processes of conceptualizing the Bulgarian state tradition and providing it with an identity. His cult should also be seen in the context of incorporating Bulgaria into the greater cultural community that some forty years ago Dimitri Obolensky called the "Byzantine Commonwealth," an affiliation that became and has remained the primary characterization of medieval Bulgarian culture.

To set the stage, let me first outline the principal stages in the evolution of the Bulgarian state. The first covers the time after the Proto-Bulgarian settlement in the lands along the lower Danube and the establishment of closer political, economic and cultural contacts with the Byzantine Empire and its Christian population. The second stage is marked by the conversion of the Bulgarians to Christianity at the time of Khan Boris-Michael in the middle of the ninth century. The third stage spans the years of Tsar Symeon's reign and is defined by his ambitions to displace the Byzantine *basileus* from his supreme position in the Christian universe and create a new universal empire (or rather to renew the existing one) with the resources of Bulgarian society. Finally, the fourth stage is Tsar Peter's time, when Bulgaria acquired the characteristics it would maintain through the Middle Ages. Bulgarian rulers never completely gave up their dream to conquer Constantinople and their desire to reign at the top of Orthodox Christianity. However, realizing their lack of resources, be they military and demographic, as well as economic and spiritual, they modified the idea, keeping its main characteristics: if they were not able to replace Byzantium, they could at least duplicate the empire. A society, a state, and a culture were developed based on the idea of a second empire out of the Bulgarian capital, a "*Byzance hors de Byzance*" – to quote Nicolae Iorga. It is in this respect that the sainted Tsar Peter is important.

Tsar Peter has not been ignored in modern historiography.¹ However,

¹ В. Златарски. *История на българската държава през средните векове*, I (2). София 1971, 495–602; П. Мутафчиев. *История на българския народ*. София 1986, 200–22; *История на България*, I. София 1999, 271–307; J. V. A. Fine, Jr. "A Fresh Look at Bulgaria under Tsar Peter." *Byzantine Studies*, 5 (Pts. 1–2, 1978), 88–95; И. Билярски, *Покровители на Царството. Св. цар Петър и св. Параскева-Петка*. София 2004; Д. Чешмеджиев. „Култът към цар Петър I (927–965): манастирски или държавен?“ *Love of Learning and Devotion to God in Orthodox Monasteries / Љубав према образовању и вера у Бога у православним манастирима*, 1. Београд – Columbus 2006, 245–57; И. Билярски, М. Йовчева. „За датата на успението на цар Петър и за култа към него“.

as far as Bulgarian historical tradition is concerned, he has not been treated favorably. This is largely due to a prejudice expressed by the so-called “classical” works of Bulgarian history from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, which reflected the ideas of national revival under the Ottoman rule. Fortunately, in the last few decades this attitude has been changing and the importance of Tsar Peter is becoming clearly recognized.² He is the only Bulgarian ruler who was sainted during the Middle Ages.³ His cult attained special political significance and, as a result of its gestation over the course of the two centuries following his death, became instrumental to the formation of the Bulgarian state ideology. During that period, his cult compared to that of the widely popular figure of St. John of Rila,⁴ and to the cult of St. Archangel Michael.

II. The Cult of Tsar Peter and Its Presence in the Sources

Regrettably, evidence about Tsar Peter’s cult in Bulgaria is scarce. We do not know the precise date of the beginning of his veneration. Presumably it happened not long after his death, around the end of the tenth century; of this more later. The main extant sources are two copies of the sainted ruler’s service

Тангра. Сборник в чест на 70-годишнината на акад. Васил Гюзелев. София 2006, 543–57; Б. Николова. „Цар Петър и характерът на неговия култ“. *Palaeobulgarica*, 33 (2009), 2, 63–77.

² Tsar Peter’s literary works and his identification with Peter the Monk are not discussed here. See Р. Павлова. *Петър Черноризец – старобългарски писател от X век* (=Кирило-Методиевски студии, 9). София 1994, 9–30; И. Билярски. „Един препис на „Молитвата към Пресветата Богородица“ на св. Петър Черноризец (BAN, Mss. Sl. 219)“. *Palaeobulgarica*, 27 (2003), 4, 85–91.

³ This is a complex question in the Bulgarian historiography and my opinion does not represent the popularly held view. Since the matter falls beyond the scope of this paper, I will only quote the latest publications that cite earlier references: П. Георгиев, С. Смядовски. „Параклисът при Голямата базилика в Плиска“. *Археология*, 2 (1982); П. Георгиев. *Мартириумът в Плиска*. София 1993; Н. Георгиева. „Към въпроса за почитането на княз Борис като светец“. *Кирило-Методиевски студии*, 8 (1991), 178–88; Д. Чешмеджиев. „Към въпроса за култа към княз Борис-Михаил в средновековна България“. *Исторически преглед* (1999), 3–4, 158–75.

⁴ I. Biliarsky. “Saint Jean de Rila et saint tsar Pierre. Les destins de deux cultes du X^e siècle.” *Byzantium and the Bulgarians / Byzantio kai Boulgaroi (1018–1185)*, Institute for Byzantine Research, International Symposium, 18 (2008), 161–74.

that were, considered for a long time, separate works.⁵ The first version is part of the *Dragan's Menaion*, a thirteenth-century liturgical book the better part of which is now in the library of Zographou Monastery on Mount Athos. In the nineteenth century, leaves of the manuscript were torn out by the Russian scholar Victor Grigorovich and disappeared. We can use only the parts of the service that Grigorovich published (they were reprinted by Yordan Ivanov). The other version was in a book of monthly services dating to the thirteenth or fourteenth century Ms 434 (139) of the collection of the National Library in Belgrade that burnt during World War II. Currently, therefore, there is no original manuscript copy of the service, an obvious problem for an in-depth analysis.

The service does not provide much information, but nonetheless contains interesting evidence regarding the cult. The sainted tsar is defined as “intercessor” for his nation, who is supposed to pray to God for his people.⁶ The quotation of the biblical King David and the royal unction represent a typical verbal formula designating a ruler.⁷ The stress on the figure of the tsar as intercessor identify him as a saint-protector, which enforces the specifically medieval notion of the unity of sanctity, power, and the nation. The dating of the text of the service to the time before the Byzantine conquest of Preslav⁸ provides clues to the origin of the cult. Several historical and apocalyptic texts support this dating. I will pay special attention to these sources, as well as to some references in *synaxaria* and hagiography texts, such as the story of the martyrs of Zographou.

In addition, Tsar Peter is commemorated in several liturgical books. His day in the Eastern Orthodox liturgical calendar was, and still is, January 30, which is presumably the day of his death.⁹ It is the date cited in the Lesnovski

⁵ Й. Иванов. *Български старини из Македония* [hereafter *БСМ*]. София 1931, 383–94; И. Дуйчев. *Из старата българска книжнина*, I. София 1943, 98–102; С. Кожухаров. „Търновската книжовна школа и развитието на химничната поезия в старата българска литература“. In: *Търновска книжовна школа*, I: София 1974, 288; idem. In: *Старобългарска литература. Енциклопедичен речник*. София 1992, 425–6; Павлова, “Петър Черноризец”, 19.

⁶ Иванов, *БСМ*, 387 сл.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 388.

⁸ Кожухаров, *Старобългарска литература*, 425–6. Yordan Ivanov also thought that the person who compiled this text was one of St. Tsar Peter’s followers (Иванов, *БСМ*, 394).

⁹ Иванов, *БСМ*, 383. For another opinion see: И. Билярски, М. Йовчева. „За датата“, 543–57.

Synaxarium from 1330. There, on f. 128v, we can find the *troparion* in his honor: мѣца то а стрѣть стго мѣа иполита. папзы римоу. и друужий || и Петра црѣь Българьска. тр. гл. д. || Днь радостиа твоєа памть славь || мз прѣповне. съшедыше с Петре славы || нзыи. чающе оулоучити . тобою ѿ ба || мль. и прощение грѣховъ ншихъ. || сего ради ѿ останцѣь своемь. ѿче Петре сте ми || с кз Хоу боу —.¹⁰

Петръ црѣь Българскзыи (Tsar Peter of Bulgaria) is also commemorated on fol. 125v of a Gospel from Zographou dated to 1305.¹¹ We find similar commemoration in a fourteenth-century *synaxarium* from the collection of count Romyantsev in Moscow. There, St. Tsar Peter is commemorated with St. Hippolytus, the Roman Pontiff: мѣца то а стрѣть стго мѣа || иполита папзы римьскаго || и друужинь его. и петра црѣь Българскаго трѣ гл. д. || Днь радостию твою паметь славимь прѣпне. съшьше се петре || славимь. чѣюще оулоучити тобою ѿ ба мль и прощение || грѣхъ ншихъ. сего ради о своемь си останца оче петре сте || помли се хоу даровати дшамь ншимь велию.¹²

Tsar Peter is also mentioned as a saint in a *troparion* in a fourteenth-century manuscript, now part of the Khludov Collection in the Russian State Library, Ms 189, fol. 91v:

мѣца то а стрѣть стго мѣа иполита || папзы римьскааго и друужинзы его и петра црѣа Българьскаго || трѣ гл. д. днь радостию твою паметь славимь прѣпне. съшьше || се петре славыи. чающе оулоучити тобою ѿ ба мль. || и прощение грѣховъ нашихъ. сего ради ѿ своемьь встанце. || вче петре сте помоли се кз хоу боу влко вли:.

To these sources we can add a *synaxarium*, now in the Serbian National Library, Ms 705).¹⁴ Tsar Peter is also cited as a saint in the forged royal charter for Virgino Brdo (... стаго Петра ц. ...).¹⁵ Though this document is not authentic, it does not take away the historical evidence about the ruler's sanctity. If the text was indeed added to King Stephen Milutin's charter of 1300, the mention of Tsar Peter as a saint supports the fact that his veneration had retained its

¹⁰ Иванов, *ibid.*, Павлова, *Петър Черноризец*, 25.

¹¹ Иванов, *op. cit.*

¹² Иванов, *ibid.*; Павлова, *op. cit.*

¹³ Павлова, *op. cit.*, 25.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 24.

¹⁵ Г. Ильинский. *Грамоты болгарскихъ царей*. Москва 1911, 15 (10).

ideological importance. Obviously, to the monks of Mount Athos the reference to the saintly tsar was meant to substantiate the endowment of the monastery of Chilandar and to highlight the king's favors. Moreover, it is important to note that this was happening in a Serbian-dominated environment. Further, Tsar Peter is recorded as a saint in the so-called *Narrative of the martyrs of Zographou*, written not long after 1275, probably in the beginning of the fourteenth century. Peter the saintly tsar (Πετρου τῆς ἐπιτοῦ αὐτοῦ¹⁶) is listed among the names of other rulers who are not defined as saints.

Additionally, Tsar Peter is called a saint in the beadroll in Drinov's copy of the Bulgarian Synodicon: и Петръ цѣръ сѣтмъ вѣнскъ его (To Peter, the saint tsar [=Khan Boris-Michael's/ grandson]).¹⁷ Such obituary beadrolls, however, are later sources and do not have the weight of official documents; in other beadrolls Peter is not mentioned as a saint.¹⁸ Still, the evidence should not be ignored since it adds to the source naming the tsar as a saint.

III. St. Tsar Peter and St. Constantine

One might argue, then, that it is likely that Tsar Peter's canonization occurred as early as the tenth century, since solid evidence for the cult goes back to the eleventh century. It is clear that his cult influenced the political life in Bulgaria from the very beginning. It is important to stress its relationship to the cult of the sainted Emperor Constantine the Great, who was widely venerated in Constantinople. In Bulgaria, as in Byzantium (but unlike Serbia), rulers were rarely elevated to sainthood. The emperor Constantine and Tsar Peter represent exceptions where sainthood was considered warranted. In addition, their cults set up the main characteristics of the imperial ideology in both countries. I would argue that the two cults are closely associated with the idea of *renovatio imperii*, and are fundamental to the concept of the sacredness of the imperial office.

¹⁶ Иванов, *БСМ*, 439.

¹⁷ Й. Иванов. „Поменици на българските царе и царици“. In: Й. Иванов. *Избрани произведения*. София 1982, I: 152; И. Божилов, А Тотоманова, И. Билярски, *Борилев Синодик. Издание и превод*. София 2010, 149, 311.

¹⁸ See Иванов, „Поменици“, 146 сл.; И. Билярски. „Погановският поменик“. *Годишник на Софийския университет. Център за славяно-византийски проучвания „Иван Дуйчев“*, 84–85:4 (1990-1991), 55.

As far as the situation in Constantinople is concerned, recent historiography has stressed the position of Constantine as the emblematic figure in the imperial and church tradition of *renovatio imperii*.¹⁹ His mission to convert the Romans to Christianity was compared to the salvific mission of God's Word, Jesus Christ, whose sacrifice saved humankind, and who came to be identified as the new Adam.²⁰ Constantine had turned the course of history when he established the Christian empire, and thus saved humankind. Emperors who identified themselves as "New Constantine" appeared as early as the fifth century, during the transitional period of the Heraclian dynasty, and again following the period of the iconoclast emperors. Not surprisingly, in the eleventh century, a great number of sovereigns and usurpers took the name "Constantine" in order to legitimize their power.²¹ This is the important topic of renewal-restoration that Paul Alexander and Paul Magdalino identify as one of the characteristics of Byzantine civilization.²² Renovations were justified through comparisons with the founding of the Christian empire, and rulers modeled themselves after Constantine, the great paragon of the past. In addition, an important component in the fashioning of the ruler's image was the emphasis on the ruler's Christ-like nature, his *Christomimesis*. Christian rulers were considered human counterparts of the divine archetype, Christ, just as the Kingdom of Heaven was believed to be a model and prototype of Christian Empire.

There is certainly a relationship between the imperial cults of St. Constantine and of St. Tsar Peter, though extreme statements that claim a similarity that borders on a conflation of the identity of the two cults should be avoided.²³ In order to reveal their shared features, however, we should refer to the hagiography and eschatological writings. The first source is a text that contains a narrative about the translation of St. John of Rila's relics.

¹⁹ P. Alexander. "The Strength of Empire and Capital as Seen through Byzantine Eyes." *Speculum*, 37 (1962), 353; A. Kazhdan. "'Constantin imaginaire.' Byzantine Legends of the Ninth Century about Constantine the Great." *Byzantion*, 57 (1987), 196–250; P. Magdalino, ed. *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th-13th Centuries*. London 1994.

²⁰ Alexander, *op.cit.*, 351–4.

²¹ Magdalino, *op.cit.*, 3.

²² Alexander, *op.cit.*, 351; Magdalino, *op.cit.*, 7–9.

²³ On that matter see Билярски, Йовчева, „За датата“, 553–4.

That was an event of great religious and political significance²⁴ as the relics were translated to the capital in order to ensure God's blessings for the entire Bulgarian state. In the *Life of St. John of Rila in Dragan's Menaion*, the religious zeal of Tsar John I Asen, who translated the holy man's relics from Serdica to Tarnovgrad, is compared to the fervor of the ancient rulers St. Constantine and the sainted Tsar Peter.²⁵ Such a comparison is actually a reference to the sanctity of royalty and the sanctity of power, epitomized by the two rulers. In the *Life*, there is the implicit comparison between Tsar John's dedication to amass holy relics in the capital and the discovery of the True Cross during the time of Constantine and other relics of saints that revealed during the reigns of later rulers. This is one more argument in support of the identification of power with sanctity through the holy relics.

The apocryphal text *Prophet Isaiah's Narrative about How He Was Taken by an Angel to the Seventh Heaven* includes incidents from Tsar Peter's life and deserves special attention.²⁶ In the text, Tsar Peter is described as "the holy Peter, Tsar of Bulgaria... who ruled the Bulgarian land for twelve years without any sin, without a wife, and his reign was blessed..."²⁷ It was just during his reign that St. Constantine was miraculously reborn to a pious widow called Elena.²⁸ The connection between the two rulers is explicit in the text as the mediaeval writer insists that "Tsar Peter and Tsar Constantine loved each other." Against this backdrop, the author presents the events surrounding the discovery of the Holy Cross by St. Constantine and his mother, St. Helena,

²⁴ P. Guran. "La translation des reliques: un rituel monarchique?" *Revue des études sud-est européennes*, 36 (1998), 1-4, 195-231.

²⁵ „и поревнова древнѣимъ црѣмъ, рекъ же великомуу Константину црю и Петру црю.“ It should be noted that neither of them is named a saint. See И. Иванов. „Жития на св. Ивана Рилски“. *Годишник на Софийския университет. Историко-филологичен факултет*, 32:13 (1936), 58.

²⁶ This is the so-called Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle, a term fabricated by Yordan Ivanov, which I will not use here. For an English translation, see K. Petkov. *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria, Seventh-Fifteenth Century: The Records of a Bygone Culture*. Leiden, Boston, 2008, 194-199, no. 114.

²⁷ И. Билярски. *Сказание на Исая пророка и формирането на политическата идеология на ранносредновековна България*. София 2011, 19-20 (л. 401г-402а).

²⁸ For more details see: Билярски, *Сказание на Исая пророка*, 140-74; As Petkov points out, the story confuses Constantine the Great with his tenth-century namesake, Constantine Porphyrogenetos, and make a composite personage. See Petkov. *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria*, 196-197.

as well as the founding of Constantinople. Undoubtedly, the greater context is eschatological, which adds special significance to the deeds of the saints as they endeavor on behalf of human salvation.

Another interesting parallel between the lives of the two rulers concerns their places of death. While, according to the text, Tsar Peter died in Rome (while Constantine's death took place at the Golgotha), literally: “а доголи прїидоше нѣкатори насилници јако исполнини. и погъвише змаю бѣгарьскю по морю а Петръ црѣь бѣгарьскѣи праведни мѣжь встави црѣство и бѣжа на запад, в Рим и тѣ сконча житїе свое.”²⁹ A similar text is quoted in Jacob Kraykov's printed book *Разъличніе потребїи* (henceforth *Razlichni potrebi*), published in Venice in 1572. There, the publisher clearly states that the text he used as the basis of his printed edition was found among “the books of Tsar Peter of Bulgaria... who died in Rome” (сѣи иъзводъ ѿвѣстохъ, азъ Іаковъ въ книгахъ Петра цра бѣгарскаго иже вѣше томоу настолни градъ велики Прѣславъ и оумрѣтъ въ вѣлики Римь).³⁰ Scholars unanimously agree that the evidence about Tsar Peter's death in Rome is legendary. It contradicts all other evidence and runs counter to the logical course of events.³¹ We know the tsar took his monastic vows in the Bulgarian capital right before his death, so he could not have died in Rome. Still, it is worth citing *Prophet Isaiah's Narrative*, which repeats almost the same assertion in an attempt to find any connection with the text in the Venetian publication. If there is such a connection, another question arises: how did Jacob Kraykov come to know about the text from the *Narrative*? The latest and the most thorough research on these texts has been conducted by Mariyana Tsibranska and is published in her book on the early Cyrillic prints.³² Tsibranska conducted a thorough investigation of the edition of *Razlichni Potrebi* and of book printing in Venice in relation to cultural life in the western Bulgarian lands and found a third account describing Tsar

²⁹ Билярски, *Сказание на Исаяя пророка*, 20 (л. 402a). Following Petkov's translation, the passage reads: “certain violent men came, as tall as giants, and devastated the Bulgarian land along the sea coast. The Bulgarian tsar Peter, an orthodox man, gave up his tsardom, fled to the West, to Rome, and there he ended his life.” See Petkov. *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria*, 197.

³⁰ See Иванов, *БСМ*, 386; М. Цибранска-Костова. *Студии върху кирилската палеотипия XV–XVIII в.* София 2007, 33.

³¹ See Билярски, Йовчева, „За датата”, 545.

³² М. Цибранска-Костова. *Студии върху кирилската палеотипия*.

Peter's death in Rome in an eighteenth-century *euchologion*.³³ The book had belonged to Botyo Petkov, a teacher from Kalofer; Nikolay Palauzov heard about it from Petko R. Slaveikov. The report of Peter's death in Rome is said to be included in an Easter computational table ascribed to the tsar, who had been not only a ruler but a man of letters as well.³⁴ According to Tsibranska, the text that contains the report has been influenced by Jacob Kraykov's information. We cannot know what the connection between the evidence in the *Narrative* and that in *Razlichni Potrebi* is; however, I would hazard a re-interpretation. All scholars who wrote on the matter of Tsar Peter's death think that *Prophet Isaiah's Narrative* influenced the printed book. However, the *Narrative* is extant in a seventeenth-century copy, whereas the printed book is dated to 1572. Jacob Kraykov's books were disseminated in Macedonia and Kraishte (Western Bulgaria), where the manuscript containing the *Narrative* originated, or at least where it circulated. As it is possible that the text of *Prophet Isaiah's Narrative* is a compilation, and that it was not completely finished in the eleventh century, I would suggest that the printed book may have influenced the manuscript. It is chronologically and geographically feasible. Furthermore, the report of Tsar Peter's death in Rome is not integral to the compiled narrative of the Prophet Isaiah and thus may have been added at a much later date. This would change the context considerably. The story may have been created by Jacob Kraykov, who perhaps wanted to form a connection between Bulgaria and Italy. Indeed, Tsibranska's research has established such tendencies on lexical level in his books.

In the nineteenth century, a Russian scholar proposed that Tsar Peter died as a monk in a certain monastery in Constantinople.³⁵ The source for his claim is not clear, but the story is typologically similar to the statement about the ruler's death in Rome since Constantinople was viewed as the New Rome. Tsar Peter's death in Constantinople is not corroborated by other sources, but it would be as much of a mistake to ignore its ideological significance as it would be to accept the account as historically accurate. Placing Peter's death in either Rome or Constantinople provides an imperial paradigm and is directly

³³ Цибранска-Костова, *op.cit.*, 33–59 and especially 56–9. See also Билярски, *Сказание на Исая пророка*, 13–4, 172–4.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 58–9.

³⁵ Соболевский. *Древняя церковно-славянская литература и ея значение*, 16, quoted by Иванов, *БСМ*, 386.

related to the apocryphal account where St. Peter and St. Constantine's lives are presented together. Even if we assume that the claim that the death of Peter occurred in Rome or Constantinople is a later interpolation, it represents an important typological model of power that suggests the tsar's life is comparable to that of Constantine. In the *Narrative* both rulers embody the royal paradigm of the pious tsar and *renovator imperii*.

I would now like to draw attention to certain aspects of the *Narrative*, which are especially important to the present study. Tsar Peter is the only ruler called a saint (ВЪ ДНИ И ЛѢТА СТОГО ПЕТРА ЦРЯ ВЪЛГАРСКАГО = in the days and years of St. Peter, Tsar of Bulgaria). Khan Boris-Michael is not, although he too was described as an extremely pious and faithful Christian. Additionally, in the *Narrative*, St. Peter's reign is directly related to the renewal of the empire, comparable to the conversion of Emperor Constantine the Great and all the events connected with it. Finally, all the events are related to the empire and to the Roman legacy; the reference to the city of Rome as the place where Tsar Peter died reinforces the idea.

The *Narrative* is very confused and the information it presents can hardly be taken at face value. However, it is a good source about the ideology operative in the time. It makes it clear that the two imperial cults, that of St. Constantine's and that of St. Peter, were perceived as interconnected, a fact that highlights the political significance of the cult of Tsar Peter.

IV. The Tsar Renovator

Another question that needs to be addressed concerns the specific type of veneration that the sainted tsar inspired. There are two main types of royal cults: the cult of the rulers who converted their countries to Christianity and the cult of ruler-martyrs. We can add to these the paradigm of the ruler-monk. Tsar Peter was not a martyr; nor was he the sovereign who converted Bulgaria. Nevertheless, Peter's sainthood appears to be more closely related to the cult of Christian rulers who converted their people. The Christianization of any nation is a long process, and the merit for the conversion of a country did not normally belong only to the ruler who first set out to convert his people. That is why Tsar Peter could be perceived as one of the "Christianizers" of Bulgaria, which may explain the character of his cult. As I have already noted, Khan Boris-Michael ushered in the new faith making it official religion and Tsar Symeon laid the foundations of the imperial idea in Bulgaria; but it was under

Tsar Peter that Bulgaria really became a Christian country of the “Byzantine” type, a “*Byzance hors de Byzance*.” It became an Eastern Orthodox empire: a feature that Bulgaria kept throughout the Middle Ages. These facts determine the significance of Tsar Peter in the history of the state.

Circumstantial evidence lends support to this conclusion. One clear manifestation of Tsar Peter’s cult in the political sphere is the existence of an obvious connection between the saintly ruler and the aim to restore the Bulgarian state in the years after 1018 when the apocryphal *Narrative* was written. All leaders of eleventh-century Bulgarian revolts against Byzantine rule took the name Peter in order to legitimize their claims for the power. First in line was Delyan, who belonged to the family of Tsar Samuel.³⁶ In 1040, he was proclaimed tsar by the rebels and obtained the royal name Peter. It should be pointed out, however, that this connection was ideological and not dynastic. Peter Delyan did not take a name related to his own dynasty, as he was a son of Tsar Gabriel Radomir and grandson of Tsar Samuel. Yet, he took the name of Tsar Peter who belonged to the old Pliska/Preslav dynasty of the ninth and tenth centuries before the eastern Bulgarian lands were conquered by John Tzimiskes.

The events in 1072 had a similar character. The Serbian prince Constantine Bodin was proclaimed tsar of the Bulgarians, and assumed the name Peter.³⁷ Here again it must be emphasized that his grandmother on his father’s side was Tsar Samuel’s granddaughter, daughter of Theodora-Kosara and the Serbian prince St. John Vladimir. And yet, Constantine Bodin took the royal name Peter. It can be concluded that those tsars preferred the religious connection as namesakes of the sainted tsar rather than their own dynastic affiliations. These events suggest that power in Bulgaria was identified with the legacy of the sainted Tsar Peter. In the context of these arguments, it is reasonable to reconsider Vassil Zlatarski’s statement that the Serbian Constantine Bodin took the name Peter after Peter Delyan.³⁸ Indeed, Zlatarski’s interpretation reveals his own bias towards St. Tsar Peter. The last case dates to some one hundred years later and the re-establishment of the Bulgarian statehood by the

³⁶ В. Златарски. *История на българската държава през средните векове*, II. София 1934, 44 сл.; *История на България*, I: 396–400.

³⁷ Златарски, *op.cit.*, II: 141–2; *История на България*, I: 403–5.

³⁸ Златарски, *op.cit.*, II: 142.

Asenid brothers. The events are well known³⁹ and I will only point out that the two older brothers were called Theodore and Belgun, but when they took power, they changed their names to Peter and John.⁴⁰ The rite of crowning of the elder brother Theodore-Peter was the main event that had ideological overtones of *renovatio imperii*.⁴¹ In this context, the change of Theodore's name to that of the royal saint Peter is not accidental. It was a conscious act through which Theodore emphasized the traditions inherited from the First Bulgarian state and stressed his own relationship to the celestial patron and tsar of Bulgaria. His choice was a sign of continuity, especially important for the understanding of the ideology of medieval Bulgaria.

Tsar Peter is also mentioned in Tsar Kaloyan's correspondence with Pope Innocent III, in which the Bulgarian ruler was justifying and substantiating the reestablishment of the state and was presenting arguments to convince the Holy See to recognize him as Bulgaria's sovereign.⁴² This suggests that even as late as the early thirteenth century, Tsar Peter's cult was important in the formation of state ideology, although other cults (the cult of St. Demetrios of Thessaloniki and later, the cult of St. Paraskeva/Petka) had been gradually replacing that of the saintly tsar.

There was another important cult in the Bulgarian Middle Ages that continues to exist in modern times: the cult of St. John of Rila. He was venerated as Bulgaria's heavenly intercessor and his cult encompassed virtually all Eastern Orthodox peoples. This was due to his ascetic feats and superior monastic virtue. The cult of St. John of Rila was never directly identified with Bulgarian royal power (or at least not clearly enough).⁴³ It was

³⁹ The latest studies on this matter are: И. Божилов. „Асеневици: Renovatio imperii Bulgariae et Graecorum.“ In: И. Божилов. *Седем етода по средновековна история*. София 1995, 131–217; *История на България*, I: 421 сл.

⁴⁰ See Божилов, Тотоманова, Билярски, *Борилев Синодик*, 150, 311.

⁴¹ Nicetae Choniatae *Historia*, rec. J. A. van Dieten, Berolini et Novi Eboraci, 1975, 371 suiv.; И. Божилов. „Фамилията на Асеневици (1186-1460)“. *Генеалогия и просопография*, 1/1–2 (1985); *История на България*, I: 425–9.

⁴² *Acta Innocentii PP. III (1198-1216)*. E registri Vaticanis aliisque eruit, introductione auxit, notisque illustruit P. Theodosius Haluscynski, Typis polyglottis Vaticanis 1944, No 29, 227, Appendix I, No 13, 573; И. Дуйчев. „Преписката на папа Инокентия III с българите“. *Годишник на Софийския университет. Историко-филологичен факултет*, 37: 3 (1942), n.3, 24, n.18, 47; *История на България*, I: 443 сл.

⁴³ That is why I cannot agree with the statement of my colleague Ivan Lazarov that the

this aloofness that allowed George Scilitzes to write the saint's *Life* with the intention to integrate the Bulgarians in the Byzantine Empire. On a different note, in the fourteenth century it gave an opportunity to Patriarch Euthymius, in his *Life of St. John of Rila*, to use the cult of the hermit to bring to the fore the supremacy of the Church over lay authority.⁴⁴

Nevertheless, St. John of Rila and St. Tsar Peter are presented together in art. The only extant medieval images of Tsar Peter are part of a scene in the narrative cycle depicting the life of St. John of Rila. The scene represents "the meeting" between the two saints in the Rila wilderness. It is painted in a fresco in the fourteenth-century Tower of Hrelyo in the monastery of Rila.⁴⁵ In addition, the tsar is depicted also in two icons of St. John dating to the Ottoman period (sixteenth to eighteenth century).⁴⁶ These images are based on an episode from the *Life of St. John*, according to which the Bulgarian ruler went to Rila to find the hermit.⁴⁷ St. John, however, refused to meet the tsar face-to-face and the two of them just bowed to one another from a distance. This episode from the *Life* provides an insight about the relationship between state and church in medieval Bulgaria. It also elucidates Patriarch Euthymius' reasons to use the account as an example of the church's superiority over the state. The text was important to him as it presented an ecclesiastic point of view on power. Undoubtedly, the images of Tsar Peter on the icons dating to

name John, which was traditional for the Asenide dynasty, derived from the special link between St. John of Rila and Tsar John I Asen. See И. Лазаров. „Владетелското име „Йоан“ и култът към св. Йоан Рилски в държавно-политическата идеология на Второто българско царство“. *Светогорската обител Зограф*, 3 (1999), 90–8.

⁴⁴ E. Kałużniacki. *Werke des Patriarchen von Bulgarien Euthymius (1375–1393)*. Wien 1901, 20. It is to emphasize that the narration about the visit of Tsar Peter in Rila mountain from the so called "Popular Vita" of St. John of Rila is a typological *topos*, related to the story about the Prophet Moses' ascension to Mount Horeb in Sinai and his "meeting" with God, when Moses received the Ten Commandments from the very hands of God (Exodus 24 sq.): Билиарски, *Сказание на Исаяя пророка*, 154–9.

⁴⁵ Л. Прашков. „Един летописен цикъл от житието на Иван Рилски от XIV век“. In: *Търновска книжовна школа*, I. София 1974, 429–42; Е. Бакалова. „Към интерпретацията на най-ранния житиен цикъл на Иван Рилски в изобразителното изкуство“. *Кирило-Методиевски студии*, 3 (1986), 146–53; E. Bakalova. "Zur Interpretation des frühesten Zyklus der Vita des Hl. Ivan von Rila in der bildenden Kunst." In: *Festschrift für Klaus Wessel zum 70. Geburtstag (in memoriam)*. München 1988, 39–48.

⁴⁶ В. Иванова. „Образи на царь Петра въ две старинни икони“. *Известия на българското историческо дружество*, 21 (1945), 99–108.

⁴⁷ Kałużniacki, *op. cit.*, 16–20.

the Ottoman period demonstrate that the memory of the sainted ruler was still vivid centuries after his death.⁴⁸

“Royal cults” were part of the sacralization of power in pre-modern societies. In Bulgaria, for at least two centuries, rulers evoked St. Peter’s cult to legitimize their power. Yet, this “political” cult began to fade away soon after its culmination in the Asenid movement and the assumption of the royal name of the elder brother. This is due not to some internal depreciation, but to specific historical reasons. Tsar Peter’s cult was “replaced” by the cult of St. Demetrius of Thessalonica, a cult that was based on the veneration of the warrior protector and that had inherent political significance. Later, the worship of St. Paraskeva/Petka became predominant not only because of the presence of her relics in the capital city but also because of the similarity of her worship to the cult of the Holy Mother of God as protector of the capital city of Constantinople. The latter is especially characteristic of Eastern Orthodoxy and the veneration of St. Paraskeva appears as its typological substitution.⁴⁹ The Virgin Mary was a patron of the *basilei*; she was protector of her City and was worshiped as such not only in the Empire but also in all other countries that belonged to the so-called “Byzantine Commonwealth.”⁵⁰ To sum up, the evidence shows that Tsar Peter’s cult did not disappear after the end of the twelfth century (it is still part of the Bulgarian ecclesiastical calendar even today); but it lost the political significance it had had in the eleventh and twelfth century.

Exactly why was Tsar Peter the ruler who most successfully provided Bulgaria’s connection to Orthodoxy and the Byzantine civilization? Medieval writers describe him as an extremely pious ruler, a faithful son of the Church and protector of monasticism. He was in communication with some of the most distinguished hermits in Bulgaria and even beyond its borders, as is proved by

⁴⁸ Иванова, „Образи“, 102–3.

⁴⁹ See: Билярски, *Покровители*, 80 сл.; I. Biliarsky. “The Cult of Saint Petka and the Constantinopolitan Marial Cult.” *Les cultes des saints souverains et des saints guerriers et l’idéologie du pouvoir en Europe Centrale et Orientale (Actes du colloque international, 17 janvier 2004, New Europe College, Bucarest)*, volume coordonné par I. Biliarsky, Radu G. Păun. Bucarest 2007, 81–104.

⁵⁰ М. Плюханова. *Сюжеты и символы Московского царства*. Санкт Петербург 1995, 23–104 *et passim*.

his correspondence with Paul of Latro.⁵¹ Finally, at the end of his life, Peter himself took monastic vows and died in a monastery.⁵² His cult had a number of “monastic” characteristics.⁵³ In my opinion, this is the reason why he was considered the one who actually strengthened the Christian faith among the Bulgarians. In this respect, the comparison with his stern grandfather and his belligerent father is quite revealing. Under the reign of Tsar Peter, Bulgaria became “a monastic realm,” a characterization that should not be interpreted in light of the post-Enlightenment concepts of church and state. Under Tsar Peter, Bulgaria became an Orthodox state supported by the growth of monastic foundations, because monasticism is a principal characteristic of Eastern Christianity. It was during his reign that Bulgaria became a “state of Byzantine type,” a cultural designation that it maintained throughout the Middle Ages. This continuity secured the position of Tsar Peter as a symbol of the Bulgarian Christian state; his saintly authority legitimized later rulers and sanctioned the reestablishment and continuation of Bulgarian statehood in the end of the twelfth century and beyond.

⁵¹ H. Delehaye. “Vita sancti Pauli Inioris in monte Latro.” *Analecta Bollandiana*, 11 (1892), 71–2.

⁵² Павлова, *op. cit.*, 20–3; Й. Андреев. „Кем был Черноризец Петр?“. *Byzantinobulgaria*, 6 (1980), 52. It should be pointed out that the name of St. Tsar Peter is connected with the reform of monasticism in Bulgaria and with the introduction and translation of the Studion’s *Typikon* in the monastery founded by him. See Кожухаров, *op. cit.*, 288; Павлова, *op. cit.*, 28.

⁵³ See Билярски, Йовчева, „За датата“, 552; Чешмеджиев, „Култът към цар Петър I“, 257 *et passim*; Николова, *op. cit.*, 76 *et passim*.

PATRONAGE AND MONASTIC GEOGRAPHY IN BULGARIA IN THE LATE NINTH AND TENTH CENTURIES

Rossina Kostova

The scarcity of extant written evidence about Bulgarian monasticism from the late ninth through the tenth centuries makes it difficult to find out anything about the foundation, patronage, and maintenance of monasteries.^{*1} In fact, there are only two documents providing information about the founding of monasteries by private individuals: the *Long Vita of Clement of Ohrid* and the *Second Slavonic Vita of Naum of Ohrid*. Both reveal specific aspects of private and royal patronage of monastic foundations. In both cases, however, the Bulgarian rulers acted as donors rather than as founders of private establishments and they did not seem to have the privileges and control over the regulation and management of the monasteries to which founders were typically entitled. Researchers assume that the foundation of St. Panteleimon in Ohrid was built on the “leisure site” given to Clement as a gift by Prince Boris-Michael in 866.² However, as Archbishop Teophylactus of Ohrid

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¹ The most comprehensive analysis on the private monasteries in Byzantium is J. P. Thomas. *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire*. Washington D. C. 1987; R. Morris. *Monks and Laymen in Byzantium*, 843–1118. Cambridge 1995; J. Thomas, A. Constantinides Hero, eds. “Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founder’s Typika and Testaments,” 1–5. *Dumbarton Oaks Studies*, 35 (2000), chapters 3–9.

² The prince gave Clement “leisure sites” in Glavinitsa as well as three houses in Devol when Clement was sent to teach in Kutmichevitsa in 866. See „Житие на Св. Климент Охридски от Теофилакт Охридски“ [*Vita Clementis*]. In: *Гръцки извори за българската история* [= *Fontes Graeci Historiae Bulgariae, hereafter ГИБИ*], София 1994, IX: 10–42, esp. 32. A. Milev translates the passage in the *vita* concerning the location as “near Ohrid and Glavinitsa.” See А. Милев. *Гръцките жития на Климент Охридски*. София 1966, 125. See also К. Станчев, Г. Попов. *Климент Охридски*. София 1988, 39; I. Iliev. “La mission de Clément d’ Ohrid dans les terres sud-ouest de la Bulgarie Médiévale.” *Études historiques*, 13 (1985), 53–72, esp. 65. It should be pointed out that Vasil Zlatarski,

points out in Clement's *Long Vita*, the founding of the monastery was a result of Clement's strong desire to have his own monastery following the example of his lay patron Prince Boris-Michael, who had built seven churches.³ Clement's *Vita* by Demetrius Chomatenos also presents the founding of the monastery as Clement's personal endeavor,⁴ and Clement's personal claim to this monastery is best revealed by the fact that in his will he donated half of his property to that "holy establishment."⁵

Regarding the monastery of the Holy Archangel Michael on the south shore of Lake Ohrid, there is specific evidence about the involvement of the royal dynasty in its founding, although the documents date to the thirteenth century. According to the *Second Slavonic Vita of Naum*, his monastery was founded with "the means and by the bidding of the pious Tsar Michael-Boris and his son Tsar Symeon."⁶ It may be assumed that in this case too the land

using mainly the evidence in Clement's *Short Vita* by Demetrius Chomatenos, states that Clement restored the monastery of St. Demetrius near Balshi by the Semeni River, not far from the fortress Glavinitsa in Southern Albania, where the Greek inscription about the Christian conversion of the Bulgarians was found. Not long ago, S. Kissas offered further evidence in support of this opinion, adding that the monastery of St. Demetrius of Cephalonia from the thirteenth century in Thessalonica was a replica of the monastery of St. Demetrius in Glavinitsa: В. Златарски. *История на българската държава през средните векове*. София 1971, 237; S. Kissas. "The Monastery of St. Demetrius of Cephalonia in Thessaloniki: Reflections on the Origin of St. Clement of Achris." *Cyrrillomethodianum*, 13–14 (1989–90), 19–30. About the localization and the layout of the monastery of St. Panteleimon in Ohrid, see Д. Коцо. „Климентовиот манастир ‘Св. Пантелејмон’ и раскопката при „Имарет“ во Охрид“. In: *Книга за Климент Охридски*. Скопје 1966, 129–69; idem. „Нови податоци за историјата на Климентовиот манастир Св. Пантелејмон во Охрид“. In: *Климент Охридски. Студии*. Скопје 1986, 213–6; М. Ваклинова. „Охрид“. In: *Кирило-Методиевска енциклопедија*, 2. София 1995, 897; R. Kostova. "St. Clement of Ohrid and his Monastery: Some More Archaeology of the Written Evidence." In: *Византија, Балканите, Европа. Изследвания в чест на проф. В. Тъпкова-Заимова*. *Studia Balcanica*, 25 (2006), 593–605, esp. 595–6.

³ *Vita Clementis*, 36.

⁴ „Кратко Климентово житие от Димитър Хоматиан“ [Demetrius Chomatenos, *Vita Clementis*]. In: И. Дуйчев. *Проучвания на средновековната българска история и култура*. София 1981, 164–70, esp. 170–1.

⁵ *Vita Clementis*, esp. xxv, 38–9.

⁶ „Второ житие на Св. Наум“ [*Secunda Vita Naumi*]. In: Й. Иванов. *Българските старини из Македонија*. София 1970, 305–11, esp. 313. About the localization of the Monastery of the Holy Archangel Michael see Д. Коцо. „Проучвања и археолошки испитувања на црквата на манастирот Св. Наум“. *Зборник на археолошкиот музеј во Скопје*

on which the monastery was built had been part of the donation. It should be noted, however, that both the First and the Second Slavonic *Vitas* definitely associate the foundation and the construction of the monastery with Naum.⁷ Of course, mentioning the royal support for the founding of the monastery in a text fairly later than the time of the founding itself, as it is Naum's Second Slavonic *Vita*, could be also interpreted as an attempt to "confirm" certain privileges upon which the monastery could claim its royal patronage.⁸

To put it another way, the monasteries of St. Panteleimon and of the Holy Archangel Michael can be defined as "royal" monasteries in the sense of possessing juridical and economic privileges that were guaranteed to them with Boris-Michael's and Symeon's patronage. In that respect, they were similar to the monastery of the Great Lavra on Mount Athos and other Byzantine foundations, which were under imperial patronage.⁹ However, the two monasteries in Ohrid, and more precisely their churches, were not the burial churches of their lay patrons, the rulers Boris-Michael and Symeon, but of their respective founders, Clement and Naum,¹⁰ who were buried in grave chambers made according to their express wills. Therefore, the two monasteries cannot be defined as royal family foundations, similar to the Byzantine imperial monasteries from the twelfth century, as they do not display the most important element of a family monastery: the founder's and their family members' graves.¹¹ For the period after the conversion of Bulgaria to Christianity in 864 until the end of the tenth century, the two monasteries in Ohrid are the only two monastic establishments substantiated by documents that combined royal with private patronage. In both

1958, 2, 56–78.

⁷ "...сѣтворѣи съѣ монастырь на исхѣдѣ Бѣлаго ѣзера цркъвь стѣхъ Архггѣлъ..." *Prima Vita Naumi*. In: Иванов, *op. cit.*, 305–11, here 306. "великою обитѣлъ Науумъ сѣтворяетъ и храмъ чиншнавѣльника Мѣхана архангѣла и всѣхъ силъ небеснихъ.." (*Secunda Vita Naumi*, 313).

⁸ It was common for the founders of private monasteries in Byzantium in the ninth through tenth century to seek imperial support (J. Thomas. "Introduction." In: Thomas and Hero, *op. cit.*, 1: 48).

⁹ Morris, *Monks and laymen*, 140–1.

¹⁰ *Vita Clementis*, 75; *Secunda Vita Naumi*, 313.

¹¹ About the meaning of burials and memorial services in private monasteries and, more precisely, in the imperial monasteries in Byzantium, see R. Morris. "The Byzantine Aristocracy and the Monasteries." In: *Byzantine Aristocracy Ninth to Thirteenth Centuries*. BAR International Series, 221 (1984), 112–36, esp. 119–23.

cases, the patrons were clerics, Clement and Naum.¹²

Bulgarian historians have speculated a good deal on the existence of dynastic family monasteries. Some studies refer to foundations that were presumably connected with the rulers Boris-Michael, Symeon, and Peter, as places where these rulers withdrew at the end of their lives and even served as their burial sites. The monastery at Karaachteke near Varna, the compound in Patleina, near Preslav, “the monastery of Mostich” in Selishte in the Outer Town of Preslav, the monastery near the Great Basilica in Pliska are credited to have been such foundations.¹³ Some of these are specifically identified as family monasteries of the Bulgarian ruling dynasty from the late ninth and tenth centuries, such as the compound around the Round Church in Preslav and the monastery near Ravna in the region of Provadia.¹⁴ The definition of

¹² Clement’s *Prolonged Vita* by Teophilactus of Ohrid and the *Short Vita* by Demetrius Chomatenos provide more than enough evidence for the fact that Clement was a monk and a presbyter before he came to Bulgaria (*Vita Clementis*, 10–42, esp. xxv, 38–9; *Chomatenos Vita Clementis*, 164–70, esp. 170–1). Unlike him, according to his *First Slavonic Vita*, Naum became a monk only on his deathbed (И на кончинѣ своѣю прѣтець чръньвьскѣи ѿвръзъ). However, he kept his virginity to the end of his life. Therefore, it could be assumed that before his death, Naum was “a hieromonk” (*Prima Vita Naumi*, 306). Two dedicatory inscriptions, of chartophylax Paul in the south side of the narthex of the Round Church and another dedicatory inscription of Presbyter John and Thomas in the church of St. Blaise are further proof for the existence of the patronage of clerics, though these are not monasteries (K. Popkonstantinov, O. Kronsteiner. “Altbulgarische Inschriften,” I. *Die Slawischen Sprachen*, 36 (1994), 157; P. Костова. „Още веднѣж за Кръглата църква и т. нар. родов манастир в Преслав“. In: *Studia protobulgarica et mediaevalia europensia. В чест на чл. кор. проф. Веселин Бешевлиев*. София 2003, 284–303).

¹³ For Varna, see: X. и К. Шкорпил. „Печат на княза Михаил-Борис“. *Известия на Варненското археологическо дружество*, 7 (1921), 108–18; Б. Филов. „Нов паметник от Караachteке при Варна“. *Известия на Археологическия институт*, 12 (1939), 432–3. For Preslav: В. Златарски. „Към историята на открития в местността Патлейна стар български манастир“. *Известия на Археологическия институт*, 1/2 (1921–1922), 146–63; С. Станчев. „Надгробният надпис на чъргубиля Мостич от Преслав“ and В. Иванова. „Надписът на Мостич и преславският епиграфски материал“. In: С. Станчев, В. Иванова, М. Балан, П. Боев. *Надписът на чъргубиля Мостич*. София 1955, 3–43 (вж. 16) и 43–145 (вж. 63); П. Георгиев. „Класификация и характер на гробничните пострройки и съоръжения в Преслав“. *Преслав*, 4 (1993), 79–106. For Pliska: П. Георгиев, Т. Смядовски. „Параκληсът при Голямата базилика в Плиска“. *Археология*, 2 (1982), 13–27.

¹⁴ For the Round Church, see Т. Тотев. „Родов манастир на владетелите в Преслав“.

the monasteries as “royal” is based on several characteristics common to the compounds: extraordinary architectural layouts that required serious financial investments (such as the monastery next to the Great Basilica, the monastery of The Holy Mother of God near Ravna, and the monastery at Karaachteke, Varna); the organization of scriptoria (as in the monastery next to the Great Basilica, the monastery of The Holy Mother of God near Ravna, and the monastery in Karaachteke, Varna),¹⁵ which could be the result of generous support given by the ruling dynasty for the educational and literary activities of the monasteries; and last but not least, the rulers’ seals found at the sites of these compounds, which bear witness to active correspondences with the royal court.¹⁶ However, the lack of any records suggesting that a ruler or a member of his family was the only patron of a monastery with full legal and economic control, does not allow us to accept without reservation that those

Старобългарска литература, 20 (1987), 120–9; for Ravna, see П. Георгиев. „Историята на Равненския манастир“. *Епохи*, 2 (1993), 57–68. About the private monasteries in Bulgaria in the ninth to tenth centuries, see Р. Костова. „Манастирът „на Мостич“ и въпросът за манастирите, основани от частни лица в България през X в.“ *Известия на Археологическия институт*, 39 (2006), 271–87.

¹⁵ About the architectural layout of the monasteries near the Great Basilica in Pliska, Ravna, and Karaachteke, see П. Георгиев, С. Витлянов. *Архиепископията-манастир в Плиска*. София 2001; П. Георгиев. „Манастирската църква при с. Равна, Провадийско“. *Известия на Народния музей – Варна [hereafter ИНМВ]*, 21/36 (1985), 71–98; Р. Георгиев. “La signification historique et architecturale de l’église près de Ravna.” *Известия на Археологическия институт*, 38 (1994), 49–59; К. Попконстантинов, Р. Костова, В. Плетньов. „Манастирите при Равна и Караachteке до Варна в манастирската география на България през IX–X в.“ In: *Българските земи през средновековието VII–XVIII в. Международна конференция в чест на проф. Ал. Кузев. Acta Musei Varnaensis*, Варна 2005, III.2: 107–21, esp. 109–17.

¹⁶ About the seals uncovered at the sites of the monasteries near the Great Basilica in Pliska, Ravna, and Karaachteke, see И. Йорданов. „Печати и монети от Голямата базилика“. In: Георгиев, Витлянов, *op. cit.*, 219–27; П. Георгиев. „Оловни печати от манастира при с. Равна, Провадийско“. *ИНМВ*, 26/41 (1990), 103–9; Филов, *op. cit.*, 432–3. The new cogent interpretation of the inscription βαγατουρ κανέ ηρτηθ ηηνοϛ on Michael’s seals found in the monastery in Ravna, deciphered as “bagatour of the crown prince,” i.e. his personal bodyguard and mentor, does not diminish their significance with regard to the royal status of this monastery. On the contrary, one could speculate that the addressee of Bagatour Michael’s letters was Symeon’s son Michael himself, who had become a monk. See К. Попконстантинов. „Печати на багатури или печати на престолонаследници?“ In: *Юбилеен сборник „Сто години от рождението на д-р Васил Хараланов (1907–2007)“*. Шумен 2008, 75–89; idem. „Новооткрит печат на Михаил багатур и багатурският род на Йоан, Сондоке и Михаил“. *Археология*, 1–4 (2008), 68–79.

monasteries were “royal” in the true sense of the term. Moreover, none of those foundations had the most essential element of a dynastic monastery, namely, a grave of its ruler-founder and/or of members of the royal family. That is why at this stage, the monastery near the Great Basilica in Pliska and those in Ravna and Karaachteke can be defined as “royal” only in the sense that they were established on the initiative and with the support of the rulers of the time.

Archaeological excavations in Bulgaria show that the burial grounds of the monasteries yield the most valuable evidence about their patrons. For example, until recently, there was only one source, which made it possible to demonstrate the lay (non-royal) patronage of monasteries in the First Bulgarian Kingdom. This is the grave inscription in Selishte, which tells us that, when the *ičirgu-boil* Mostich was eighty years old, he left his property, took monastic vows, and died as a monk.¹⁷ I have suggested elsewhere that the compound around the cross-dome church at Selishte in the Outer Town of Preslav shows signs of a lay estate subsequently converted into a monastery. There are reasons to think, however, that the *ičirgu-boil* Mostich was not the owner of the estate, nor was he the founder of the establishment. Most likely, he just became a monk there after having donated all his possessions to the monastery.¹⁸

New evidence about the lay patronage of the monastery at Selishte came to light with the discovery in 2007 of a Cyrillic inscription in a grave chamber used for a reburial in front of the western entrance of the so-called “Mostich’s Church.” The inscription, carved onto a brick, notes that a certain grieving *synkellos* buried his mother in this place. The anthropological analysis of the remains in the two sections of the chamber confirms that lay people who were relatives of the *synkellos* had been reburied in the monastery.¹⁹ The seals of Georgi, monk and *synkellos* of the Bulgarians, uncovered to the west of

¹⁷ Станчев, „Надгробният надпис“, 16.

¹⁸ Костова, „Манастирът “на Мостич“, 278–82.

¹⁹ К. Попконстантинов, Р. Костова. „Манастир на чъргубиля Мостич, м. Селище, Велики Преслав“. In: *Археологически открития и разкопки през 2007*. София 2008, 629–31. A forthcoming joint publication with Kazimir Popkonstantinov will publish the archaeological site and finds at the grave chamber at Selishte and the inscription will be made in an article that I will write.

“Mostich’s Church,”²⁰ make it unquestionable that he was the *synkellos* who reburied his mother in the wicket of the church. It is most likely that it was this same Georgi who turned his lay estate into a family monastery and, as its founder and already having the rank of *synkellos*, he reburied there his mother and probably other family members as well. Were the *ičirgu-boil* Mostich’s remains reburied in that monastery because of his kinship with Georgi the *Synkellos*? Conclusive answer to this question can only be given after a DNA analysis of the bones from the grave chambers, which is something yet to be done.

Burial facilities in other monasteries, although lacking helpful information such as grave inscriptions, also present evidence for family patronage. For example, the burial of a woman and a child in one of the chambers of a multi-chamber grave facility found north of the church in the monastery compound in Patleina, Preslav, questions its identification as a chapel with a crypt for burying monks (*koimtëriion*).²¹ Burials of lay people (women and children included) in monasteries and even in monastery churches was common enough. Whole families, children and babies included, were buried in tombs, chapels, and grave chambers abutting the church walls in monasteries in Cappadocia dating from the mid-Byzantine period.²² On the other hand, a number of Byzantine *typika* strictly forbade people who did not belong to the monastic community, including relatives of monks and nuns, abbots and abbesses, or even relatives of the foundation’s donors to be buried in the same place with the monks or nuns.²³ Furthermore, according to the same *typika*,

²⁰ Т. Герасимов. „Нов моливдовул на Георги монах и синкел български“. *Известия на Археологическия институт*, 20 (1955), 587–8; Popkonstantinov, Kronsteiner, *op. cit.* 18.

²¹ Георгиев, „Класификация и характер“, 80. Two of the six grave chambers were empty when uncovered, two skeletons were found in two other chambers, and in another chamber another skeleton was found. See Й. Господинов. „Разкопки в Патлейна“. *Известия на българското археологическо дружество*, 4 (1915), 113–28, esp. 121.

²² N. Teteriatnikov. *Liturgical planning of Byzantine churches in Cappadocia*. Rome 1996, 178–83.

²³ “*Typikon of Empress Irene Doukaina Komnene for the Convent of the Mother of God Kecharitomene in Constantinople*,” trans. R. Jordan. In: Thomas and Hero, *op. cit.*, II: 649–725; “*Typikon of Athanasios Philanthropenos for the Monastery of St. Mamas in Constantinople*,” trans. An. Bandy. In: Thomas and Hero, *op. cit.*, III: 973–1041. About monastic burial practices, see Р. Костова. „Новооткритите гробни съоръжения в ‘манастира на Мостич’ в Преслав“. In: *Великотърновският университет и българска-*

places of honor in the monastery churches were reserved for the tombs of the founders of private family monasteries, their relatives, and their retinue, as well as for substantial donors of the respective monastery.²⁴ In the context of that practice, the crypt in the monastery in Patleina should be defined as a family tomb, most likely for the family of the founder of the monastery.²⁵ The same argument can be used to define the character of the burial facility near the southern wall of the church of the monastery near Chernoglavtsi, in the region of Shumen,²⁶ as well as the two graves in the southwest corner of the narthex of the monastery church in Cheresheto in the Outer Town of Preslav.²⁷ Evidence of lay patronage is found even in the rock monastery near

та археология (forthcoming).

²⁴ See, for example, the order of the Sebastokrator Isaac Comnenus, which demands that his grave be built in the right (i.e. the south) section of the narthex of the monastery church. Isaac orders and that his secretary, Michael, and his closest associate from his personal entourage, Leo Kastamonites, be buried in the left or right section of the exonarthex in marble sarcophagi placed in arcosolia and decorated with frescoes, while other great donors should be buried in the narthex and around the church. See “Typikon of the Sebastokrator Isaac Komnenos for the Monastery of the Mother of God Kosmosoteira near Bera,” trans. N. P. Ševčenko. In: Thomas and Hero, *op. cit.*, 2: 782–859, esp. 823–4, 837–8, 844–5. See also “Typikon of Emperor John II Komnenos for the Monastery of Christ Pantokrator in Constantinople.” In: Thomas and Hero, *op. cit.*, 2: 725–82, esp. 730, 766.

²⁵ It should be noted here that family grave chapels were built in lay estates, too. Such was the church of St. Barbara, which was used for burials of people who belonged to the family of the Protospatharius Eustathius Boilas. He explicitly mentioned in his will that he wanted to be buried in that church (S. Vryonis, Jr. “The Will of a Provincial Magnate, Eustathius Boilas (1059).” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* (1957), 262–77, esp. 267. Another example of exactly the same kind, although there is no chapel, is the grave facility with chambers under the floor situated next to the northern wall of the church in one of the thoroughly excavated lay estates in Selishte in the Outer Town of Preslav. See Ъ. Чангова. „Кръстокуполна църква с гробница в местността Селище в Преслав“. *Преслав*, 2 (1976), 93–103, here 98; К. Попконстантинов. „Граждански комплекси в Плиска и Преслав“. In: *Средновековният български град*. София 1980, 117–31, esp. 125–7.

²⁶ Two adults and a child were found buried in a stone sarcophagus, dug into the floor (Георгиев, „Класификация и характер“, 93; idem. „Манастирът от X в. при с. Черноглавци, Шуменска област“. In: *Годишник на Софийския университет. Център за славяно-византийски проучвания* “Иван Дуйчев“, 93/12 (2003), 71–81, esp. 73.

²⁷ One skeleton was found in each of the two graves, but to the left of the skeleton in the north grave, remains of a child’s skeleton were uncovered. The deceased were laid in wooden coffins (К. Шкорпил. „Преслав“. *Известия на Варненското археологическо дружество*, 3 (1910), 126–8; idem. „Паметници от столицата Преслав“. In: *1000 г. България, 927–1927 г.* София 1930, 209–11).

Basarabi (Constanța, Romania) where there are two graves of women, located in the galleries G-1 and G-2 and connected with the grave chapel E-5. In all likelihood, the person who commissioned the chapel also ordered galleries connected to it to be carved up in the rock to provide burial places for the members of his or her family.²⁸ It seems that in tenth-century Bulgaria, like in Byzantium, setting up family burial facilities was regarded as a demonstration of family patronage of the respective monasteries and “a culmination of a person’s or family involvement with the established monastery.”²⁹

Besides the family and/or personal donor’s burial facilities, the precise execution and remarkable layout of the monastic buildings can also suggest the involvement of a sponsor. For example, the interiors of all the six chapels in the rock monastery in Basarabi are distinguished by neatly proportioned layouts, careful and skillful chiseling of the rock, and expert shaping of the entrances and the altar rails. These characteristics testify to the high professional competence of the builders and thus make it unlikely that the monks made such chapels by themselves. We can only guess whether the builders were hired by the monks themselves or by lay donors, but nevertheless, it seems quite likely that some of these chapels can be ascribed to lay patronage. Peculiarities in the layout hint at such a possibility. For example, why was it necessary to carve up churches B-2 and B-3 in Besarabi after the first church, B-1, had already been made? A possible explanation could be the increase of the number of the monks in the main monastery. In this case, they should have set about building a bigger church, which they did, chiseling out the largest church in the rock compound, church B-4.³⁰ It would therefore be logical to explain the appearance of churches B-2 and B-3 in the so-called “peninsula” as the result of an outside initiative. The sponsors who commissioned the construction, wanted not only to demonstrate their piety but also to secure a special place where the monks were to pray for their souls and those of their relatives.³¹

²⁸ I. Barnea. “Les monuments rupestres de Basarabi en Dobrudja.” *Cahiers archéologiques*, 13 (1962), 187–209, esp. 204; P. Костова. „Скалният манастир при Басараби, Северна Добруджа: някои проблеми на интерпретацията“. *Българите в Северното Причерноморие*, 7 (2000), 131–53, esp. 134–7.

²⁹ Morris, *Monks and laymen*, 136; Teteriatnikov, *op. cit.*, 178–83; A. M. Talbot. “The Byzantine Family and the Monastery.” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 44 (1990), 119–29, esp. 124–6.

³⁰ Костова, „Скалният манастир при Басараби“, 132–4.

³¹ Indeed, church B-3 is connected to several grave facilities. See I. Barnea, ed. *Christian Art in Romania*, 2 (1981), 56–7.

Church B-4 itself, which was the main church in the monastery, provides one more bit of evidence for lay patronage. Apart from its size and complicated interior, which could hardly be made without considerable building skills, the main argument in favor of lay patronage is a Cyrillic inscription incised on one of the pillars that separates the narthex from the nave:³²

ТОУПАИ

ДѢЛАЕЪТЪ ГЕОРЪГЕЕЖ ЦРКЪВЕ КАМ[Є]

НЪИ СЪКЪИ КРЪИИЪ И РЪЖЪ

НЪИ

А ТЖАНЪ ИЗ ПОЛОУ

ТЪКА...ОБА СД

Є ЛЪАП....ЖЧ...

The first part of the text, “*Tupai made a church for George (St. George?), chiseling away the rock,*” identifies the inscription as that of a donor. The name “Tupai” could belong either to the builder who chiseled out the church so skillfully, or to the donor who financed the project.³³

In fact, this inscription reveals one of the main characteristics of monastery patronage in Bulgaria in the period: the varying social ranks of founders and donors. As was probably the case with Tupai, donors could belong to lower social strata and not necessarily be part of the nobility. On the other hand, royal patronage, as well as the patronage of high-standing dignitaries, was directed exclusively towards coenobitic monasteries. Prince Boris-Michael and Tsar Symeon supported the two coenobitic monasteries in Ohrid and are likely to have founded and maintained the coenobitic monasteries near the Great Basilica in Pliska, as well as those in Ravna and Karaachteke, while, as noted, the *ičirgu-boil* Mostich donated his property to the coenobitic monastery founded by Georgi, the monk and the *synkellos* of the Bulgarians.

Founders and donors of monasteries were not only people who lived

³² Popkonstantinov, Kronsteiner, *op. cit.*, 73.

³³ K. Popkonstantinov. “Les inscriptions du monastère rupestre près du village Murfatlar (Basarab). État, théories et faits.” In : D. Angelov, ed. *Dobrudža. Etudes ethno-culturelles*. Sofia 1987, 115–144 ; and Popkonstantinov 1987, 131, n. 42.

in the vicinity or were connected with the place where the foundation was located, as were the cases with Clement, Naum, Mostich,³⁴ and probably Tupai, but were also people who lived in the administrative centers of Pliska and Preslav, who could invest in building monasteries in the country. Such was the case with Boris-Michael and Symeon, who supported the two monasteries in Ohrid and probably the monasteries in Ravna and Karaachteke. Indeed, an analysis of monastic geography allows us to reveal at least some of the reasons that guided the founders of monasteries in choosing the places for their foundations.³⁵

Characteristics of Monastic Geography in Bulgaria in the Late Ninth through Tenth Centuries

If the known and positively identified monasteries are plotted on a map, it becomes clear that, although unevenly distributed, they are situated in all parts of the First Bulgarian Kingdom. The highest concentration of monasteries, ten foundations, is in today's Northeastern Bulgaria, which was hinterland of Pliska and Preslav, the largest administrative centers in the country during that period.³⁶ Three foundations have been located south of the Hemus Mountains, a region known as "The Lower Land:"³⁷ St. Panteleimon, The Holy Archangel Michael, and the monastery of St. John of Rila.³⁸ "Bulgaria

³⁴ About the residence of the *ičirgu-boil* in Preslav, see И. Венедиков. „Преслав, преди да стане столица на България“. *Преслав*, 1 (1968), 39–49.

³⁵ For an analysis of monastic geography in Bulgaria in ninth through tenth centuries, see R. Kostova. "Topography of three early Bulgarian monasteries and the reasons for their foundation: a case of study." *Archaeologia Bulgarica*, 3 (1998), 108–25; eadem. "Monasteries in the Centers, Monasteries in the Periphery: Featuring Monastic Sovereignty in Early Medieval Bulgaria." In: *Medieval Europe Basel 2002. Center, Region, Periphery. 3rd International Conference of Medieval and Later Archaeology*. Tübingen 2002, I: 504–10.; Попконстантинов, Костова, Плетньов, *op. cit.*, 107–21.

³⁶ Венедиков, *op. cit.*, 18–24.

³⁷ About the name of the lands south of the Balkans in the sources and oral tradition, see П. Коледаров. „Народният дележ „долна“ и „горна“ земя и схващането за единната цялост на своята родина“. *Македонски преглед*, 1–2 (1991), 84–98.

³⁸ See Р. Костова. „Манастирът, основан от Св. Йоан Рилски: археология на писмените свидетелства“. In: *Културните текстове на миналото: носители, символи идеи. 2. Материали от Юбилейната международна научна конференция в чест на 60-годишнината на проф. д.и.н. Казимир Попконстантинов*. София 2005, 120–8.

Beyond-the-Danube,”³⁹ the lands north of the river which appears to have been part of the territory of medieval Bulgaria was most sparsely populated with monks, as there is only one identified monastery from the tenth century, the rock monastery near Basarabi.⁴⁰ In terms of typology, four of those monasteries can be defined as “urban,” since they were situated in the fortified precincts of the outer towns of Pliska (the monastery near the Great Basilica), Preslav (the monastery in Chereshto and “Mostich’s Monastery”), and Ohrid (the monastery of St. Panteleimon). Another three monasteries (those in Patleina, in Vulkashina⁴¹ on the left bank of the Ticha, and the monastery of The Holy Archangel Michael on the southern shore of lake Ohrid) were located in the unfortified suburbs of Preslav and Ohrid. Finally, the reminder – the foundations near Chernoglavtsi, Khan Krum, Sini Vir, Ravna, and Karaachteke, as well as the rock monasteries near Krepcha and Basarabi,⁴² and the lavriot monastery of St. John of Rila – constitute the group of country monasteries, situated away from settlements and fortresses.

Monasteries, Settlements, and Roads

The analysis of the topography of the provincial monasteries defines three groups of compounds according to their connection with the settlement system and infrastructure. The first group includes the monasteries situated in densely

³⁹ About “Beyond-the-Danube Bulgaria,” see В. Тъпкова-Займова. *Долни Дунав – гранична зона на византийския Запад*. София 1976, 17–33.

⁴⁰ The sources about the functioning of the rock monastery near Dumbraveni (in the region of Constanța) are quite unreliable. See С. Chiriac. “Un monument inedit: complexul rupestre de la Dumbrăveni (jud. Constanța).” *Pontica*, 21–22 (1988–1989), 146–168.

⁴¹ Л. Огненова, С. Георгиева. „Разкопки на манастира под Вълкашина през 1948–1949“. *Известия на Археологическия институт*, 20 (1955), 373–419.

⁴² В. Антонова, Д. Владимирова, П. Петрова. „Нови археологически проучвания при с. Хан Крум, Шуменско“. *Годишник на музеите в Северна България*, 7 (1982), 65–77; П. Петрова. „Църквата при с. Сини вир, Шуменско в контекста на Преславската храмова архитектура“. In: *1100 години Велики Преслав*. Шумен 1995, I: 115–23; Р. Костова. „Скалният манастир при Кречча: още един поглед към монашеските практики в България през X в.“ In: *Проф. д.и.н. Станчо Ваклинов и средновековната българска култура*. Велико Търново 2005, 289–305. Only the rock monasteries in Krepcha and Basarabi are discussed here as they are the only monasteries that can be irrefutably dated from the late ninth through the tenth centuries. For suggestions for other rock monasteries from this period, see: Г. Атанасов. *Християнският Дуросторум – Дръстър*. Варна 2007, 186–201.

populated and well-developed settlement systems. For example, in the closest vicinities (up to 15-km radius) of each of the monasteries in Chernoglavtsi, Sini Vir, Ravna, Karaachteke, and Basarabi, there were numerous settlements, ranging between ten and forty.⁴³ Foundations situated in regions with well-developed and fortified infrastructures make another cluster. For example, the three roadbeds that passed the monastery near the village of Khan Krum, as well as the proximity of two major fortresses such as Preslav and the so-called Khan Omurtag's Palace, define the significance of the location of the monastery from a strategic point of view despite the relatively scarce population of the region (there were only four settlements in a five-kilometer radius). The same can be said about the monasteries in Sini Vir and in Ravna, which were situated near roads connecting Pliska with significant centers and regions such as Drūstūr, the Black Sea region of Varna, and Northeastern Thrace. Unlike the first two groups, isolation and harsh terrain are the main characteristics of the topography of the third group, which includes the rock monastery near Krepcha and the monastery founded by John of Rila, both of which were deliberately established in isolated places.

Therefore, it will not be far from the truth to say that the diversity in the topography of the provincial monasteries reflects the variety of the demands and reasons dictating their establishment. Naturally, a common reason for the choice of a monastery's location was its proximity to a water source.⁴⁴ Furthermore, despite the lack of written evidence, some of the factors that influenced the choice of a certain location for a monastery are apparent when the site is seen in relation to the larger settlement system and infrastructure. In this respect, the establishment of the greater part of the provincial cloisters in regions that were densely populated and connected to well-organized infrastructure prior to the appearance of the monasteries themselves demonstrates that seclusion was not the main motive of their founders, whoever they were. Rather, the founders, as well as the monks themselves, were looking for regular communication with lay people, as missionary work was a most pious reason for the establishment of a monastic

⁴³ Kostova, "Topography of three early Bulgarian monasteries," 108–25; P. Рашев и колектив, „Материали за картата на средновековна България (територията на днешна Североизточна България).“ *Плиска – Преслав*, 7 (1995), 156–332, №. 980-982; Попконстантинов, Костова, Плетньов, *op. cit.*, 108; Костова, "Скалният манастир при Басараби", 131, бел. 8.

⁴⁴ Попконстантинов, Костова, Плетньов, *op. cit.*, 107.

foundation.⁴⁵ It is hardly accidental that one of the obligations dictated by the hermit John of Rila in his *Testament* was to strengthen the faith of “the newly converted Christians from their people related to them by blood” and to admonish them to “relinquish their disgraceful pagan customs and evil ways, to which they stick even after they have adopted the Holy Faith.”⁴⁶ It is highly likely that the missionary work in execution of the state policy of intensive Christianization was the main reason for the choice of the locations of the royal monasteries in Ravna and Karaachteke, both of which were built with impressive architectural and engineering skill.⁴⁷

Here, then, arises the question about the ownership of the land on which the provincial monasteries were built. The establishment of Clement’s monastery in Ohrid on property given by Prince Boris-Michael shows one option. Clearing a previously existing settlement in order to build a monastery, as was the case in Chernoglavtsi, can also be interpreted as a sign of exerting right of ownership over the land.⁴⁸ One way or another, the appearance of a monastery inevitably changed the settlement system. However, locating settlements in the hinterland of the monasteries through fieldwork alone does not provide adequate information as to whether some settlements appeared before or after the establishment of the monasteries, i.e. whether the monasteries were a stimulating factor for the development of the settlement system. Despite the peculiarities of the text of St John of Rila’s *Testament*,⁴⁹ the statement about the bustle of people in the supposedly impenetrable recesses of the mountain wilderness caused by the appearance of the monastic community around John could be interpreted as evidence of a positive impact of the monastery on its

⁴⁵ Kostova, “Topography of Three Early Bulgarian Monasteries,” 121; eadem. “Monasteries in the Centers,” 504–10.

⁴⁶ И. Гошев. „Заветът на св. Иван Рилски в светлината на старобългарското културно наследство.“ *Годишник на Духовната академия*, 4 (1954/55), 431–505; В. Велинова, ред. *Заветът на Св. Иван Рилски. Из архивното наследство на Иван Дуйчев*. София 2000, 67. For an English translation, see K. Petkov. *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria, Seventh-Fifteenth Century: The Records of a Bygone Culture*. Leiden – Boston 2008, 110–117, no. 91.

⁴⁷ Попконстантинов, Костова, Плетньов, *op. cit.*, 107–19.

⁴⁸ Т. Балабанов. „Старобългарският манастир при с. Черноглавци“. *Известия на Историческия музей – Шумен*, 8 (1993), 263–73, esp. 265.

⁴⁹ For textological analysis of *The Testament of St. John of Rila*, see С. Пенчева, Н. Николов. „За преписите на Завета на Св. Йоан Рилски“. *Palaeobulgarica*, 3 (1997), 77–93.

surroundings.⁵⁰ At the same time, however, the transformation of the cave granary on the second terrace of the rock massif in Krepcha into a monk's cell (and later into a grave chapel) seems to have provoked a conflict with the local people, as is evident from the warning inscription authored by the "unworthy" Michael located at its entrance:⁵¹

ВЪ ИМ ОТЪЦѢ И СНА И СЪАГО ДХА СЪДЕ ПОУИ
 ВАЕТЪ ОТЪЦЪ СЪА АНЪТЪНИ А ИЖЕ СИВ
 ЦРЪКЪВЕ ЖИТЪНИЦ СЪТВОРИТЪ ДА ОТЪ
 ВЪЩАЕТЪ ПРЪДЪ ВГМЪ МИХААЪ
 НЕДОСТОНЪИ НАПИСА АМИНЪ

(In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit here rests the holy father Antony, and whoever tries to make a granary of this church let them be responsible before God. Unworthy Michael wrote this down. Amen.)

Furthermore, the character of a geographical region was changed as a result of the interaction between different types of monastic communities. For example, the anchoritic cells in the rocky environs of the monasteries near the villages of Khan Krum and Ravna must have preceded the appearance of the monasteries. In fact, the remarkable concentration of rock cells and the fame of the anchorites living there could have been the main reasons those sites were chosen for establishing two coenobitic monasteries.⁵² Last but not least, it should be noted that the foundation of at least two monasteries, in Ravna and Basarabi, undoubtedly caused the appearance of a new form of communication: the pilgrim road, as is evident by the pilgrim inscriptions and symbols incised on the walls of these monasteries.⁵³

⁵⁰ Гошев, *op. cit.*, 439; Велинова, *op. cit.*, 62.

⁵¹ К. Константинов. „Два старобългарски надписа от скалния манастир при Крепча, Търговищки окръг“. *Археология*, 3 (1977), 17–24; Костова, „Скалният манастир при Крепча“, 296.

⁵² Kostova, „Topography of three early Bulgarian monasteries,” 113–20.

⁵³ К. Попконстантинов. „Поклоннически надписи от скалния манастир при Мурфат-

Monasteries in Urban Topographies

The relativity of the term “urban topography” in ninth- and tenth-century Bulgaria aside, it is still the most appropriate term for the organization of settled space in Pliska, Preslav, and Ohrid, which considerably differed from the rest of the fortified settlements of that period. The main characteristic of their layouts was their hierarchical zoning, each consisting of an Inner Town (sometimes with a fortification-citadel), an Outer Town, and unfortified suburbs. This layout reflected the social topography of those settlements, which also included the monasteries. Thus, in all the three settlements, the monasteries were situated in or near the Outer Town. As with the provincial monasteries, one of the most interesting but also most difficult issues concerns the ownership of the land on which these urban monasteries were built. There is a clear answer to that question only for the monastery of St. Panteleimon, built, as was mentioned above, on a piece of land endowed to Clement by Boris-Michael. As is evident from the actual location of the monastery, the prince must have owned and had at his disposal at least part of the fortified territory of Ohrid. Moreover, he obviously was entitled to take away private urban property, as is apparent by the fact that he further endowed Clement with three houses in Devol, which previously belonged to a “*comita*’s family.”⁵⁴ In this case, it is only logical to assume that Boris-Michael exerted such ownership rights on land for the construction of the Great Basilica in the Outer Town of Pliska. A whole settlement was removed from that part of the town so that there was enough free space to build the church and the archbishop’s residence.⁵⁵ The later development of the compound into a monastery to the north suggests that the ownership of a large portion of the land around the Great Basilica must have been given either to the Bulgarian archbishopric, if the archbishop had become patron of the monastery, or to the monastery itself. It should be noted, though, that the changes in the topography of the Outer Town of Pliska that were caused by replacing settlements with architectural compounds were

лар (Басараби), Румъния”. In: *Палеобалканистика и старобългаристика. Втори есенни международни четения “Проф. Иван Гълъбов”*. Велико Търново 2001, 47–79; Р. Костова. „Една хипотеза за поклонничеството през Х в. в България”. *Българите в Северното Причерноморие*, 5 (1996), 149–75.

⁵⁴ *Vita Clementis*, 54.

⁵⁵ П. Георгиев. *Мартириумът в Плиска и началото на християнството в България*. София 1993, 9–40.

not due only to the construction of churches or monasteries, but also to the building of civil compounds.⁵⁶ Similar processes of development of urban topography are traceable in the history of “Mostich’s Monastery” in the Outer Town of Preslav as well. There, the original settlement of semi-sunken dwellings from the ninth century was replaced with a lay housing compound, which was turned into a monastery in the middle of the tenth century at the latest by its owner, the *synkellos* George.⁵⁷ In this case, one might say that this intensive building in a limited space, where the old buildings overlapped the new ones, provides evidence that the building activity conformed to a limited area bound by ownership rights.⁵⁸

Unlike the monasteries in the fortified part of towns, those in the suburbs do not seem to have undergone such complicated building history. However, the reasons they were established were hardly any different. For example, the monastery of The Holy Archangel Michael on the southern shore of Lake Ohrid was not only founded thanks to the material support of Boris-Michael and Symeon, but was also erected on land given for this purpose by the order of the same rulers. It is quite possible that the monastery in Vulkashina, in the most densely populated suburb of Preslav on the right bank of the river Ticha was also built on land which had been private property.⁵⁹ A peculiar case is the monastery in Patleina, the farthest from the walls of Preslav. The analysis of the building periods of the church and the archaeological evidence as a whole

⁵⁶ П. Петрова. „Към въпроса за историко-археологическата топография на Външния град на Плиска по данни на аерометода“. *Плиска – Преслав*, 5 (1992), 44–76, esp. 74.

⁵⁷ Костова, „Манастирът на Мостич“, 271–87.

⁵⁸ A similar example of conforming to the limited space of urban property was the transformation of Roman Lecapenus’s private residence in Constantinople into a family monastery. Virtually no changes were made; only a church was built next to the living quarters (C. L. Striker. *The Myrelaion (Bodrum Camii) in Istanbul*. Princeton 1981, 30–1). Here we can add the monastery and the charitable establishments set up by Michael Attaleiates in the already existing buildings he obtained in Constantinople. See “The Rule of Michael Attaleiates for his Almshouse in Rhaidestos and for the monastery of Christ Panoiktirmon in Constantinople,” trans. Alice-Mary Talbot. In: Thomas and Hero, *op. cit.*, I: 326–77, esp. 336–7.

⁵⁹ A well known example of a monastery founded on private property in a city suburb is the monastery of The Holy Mother of God Evergetis, established by a Pavel in his family estate beyond the walls of Constantinople (“Typikon of Timothy for the monastery of the Mother of God Evergetis,” trans. R. Jordan. In: Thomas and Hero, *op. cit.*, II: 454–507, here 454).

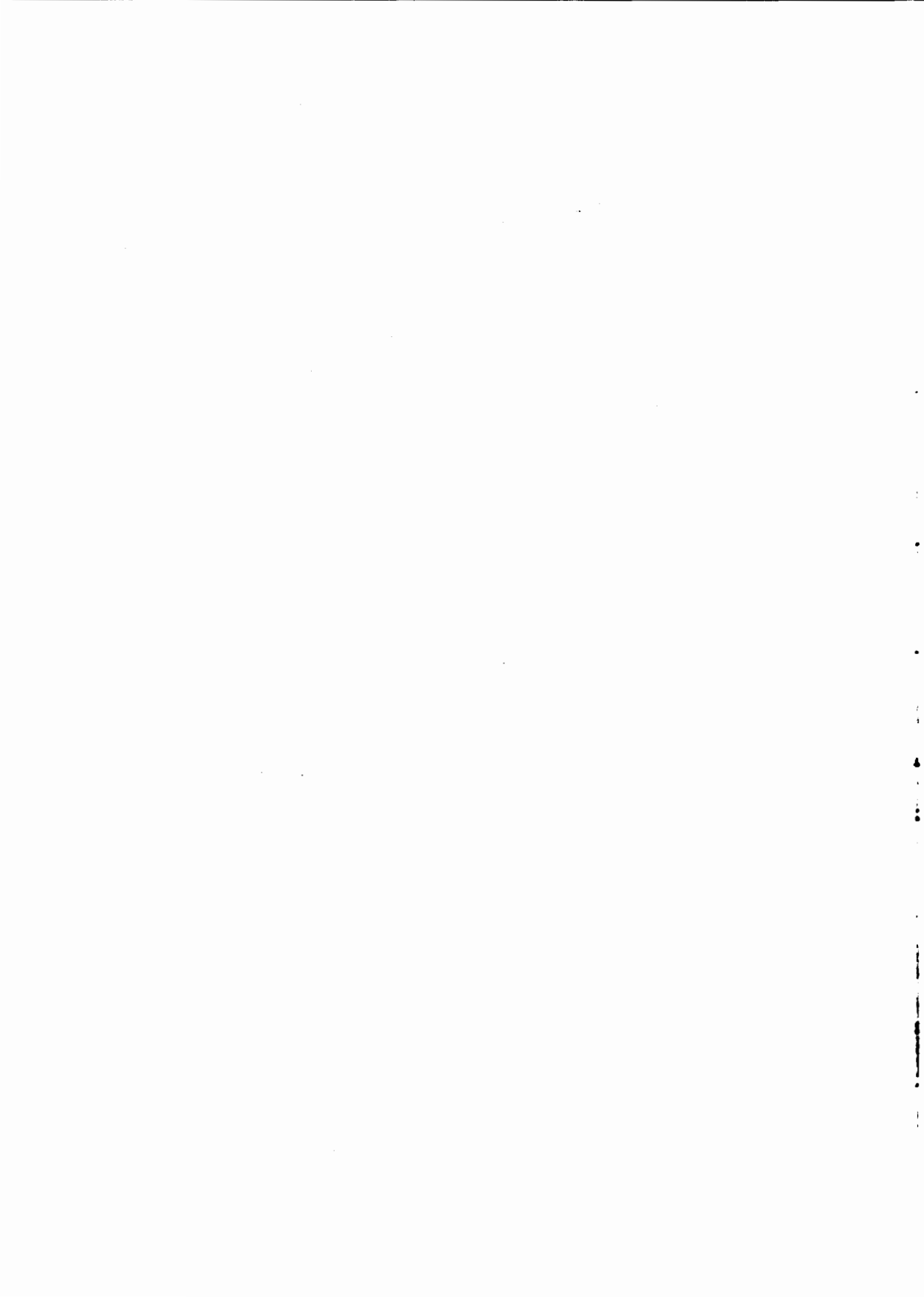
show that it was originally a lay estate of the *villa suburbana* type, specialized in the manufacture of white clay painted pottery, but was later turned into a monastery.⁶⁰

To sum it up, the analysis of written evidence and material artifacts connected with the circumstances around the establishment of the extant Bulgarian monasteries dating to the late ninth and the tenth centuries allows us to outline the historical and social aspects of monastery patronage and geography during this period. The dense pagan population of the central part of the First Bulgarian Kingdom (today's Northeastern Bulgaria and Dobrudzha) seems to have had the biggest concentration of monasteries, whereas in the lands south of the Hemus mountains, where there already was a considerable Christian population far fewer new monasteries are known at present. It is possible that future research will discover that the tendency in that area was to rebuild churches and monasteries that had been first established in the sixth and seventh centuries rather than to erect new ones. Furthermore, most of the foundations from the late ninth century are provincial, while those from the tenth century are mostly urban and suburban. The prevalence of provincial monasteries in the initial stage of the conversion of the Bulgarians can be explained by the missionary work the rulers demanded of those early monasteries, which were located in densely populated regions or alongside important roads. At the same time, the leading cultural policy of the ruling dynasty after the middle of the ninth century of adopting, endorsing, and disseminating Slavonic writing and literature connected the urban monasteries (of St. Panteleimon in Ohrid) to the provincial ones (Ravna, Karaachteke).

Even though there is evidence of royal patronage over monasteries that had missionary, educational, and literary activities, none of them can be defined as a royal family monastery. However, private family monasteries did appear in the tenth century, when the state initiative to build missionary monasteries functioning as important literary centers gave way to an increasing number of private foundations, whose purpose it was to provide appropriate places for their founders to withdraw from the lay world and to set up a resting place for

⁶⁰ R. Kostova. "Bulgarian monasteries ninth to tenth centuries: interpreting the archaeological evidence." *Плиска – Преслав*, 8 (2000), 190–202, in particular 193–5; P. Костова. „Има ли е манастири-ергастерии в България през X век?“ In: *Civitas Divino Humana. В чест на професор Георги Бакалов*. София 2004, 457–71.

themselves and their families. At the same time, the opposite tendency to seek real asceticism is revealed by the rock monasteries, which thrived in the tenth century. However, no matter if the monasteries were set up in rocks and caves or in monumental, closed compounds in or outside of towns, they quickly became pilgrim centers because of their patrons, the relics kept in their churches, and the piety and wisdom of their “unworthy” monks, as their denizens humbly styled themselves. As a result, from the second half of the ninth century to the end of the tenth century, monasticism and monasteries gradually became the most influential factors in the process of Christianization of the Bulgarians.



THE DU CANGE CATALOGUE

Vasilka Tăpkova-Zaimova

I. Characteristics of the Document, Manuscripts, and Publications

The document known as The *Du Cange Catalogue* belongs to the series of ecclesiastical sees' lists usually referred to as *Notitiae Episcopatum*. Prepared in the office of the patriarch of Constantinople, they provide information about its metropolitan sees and bishoprics. While systematic and consistent recording started probably as early as the fourth century, the lists have numerous omissions and repetitions, and do not always conform with information obtained from other sources. They have been well studied, most notably by Jean Darrouzès.¹ However, Darrouzès did not discuss the *Du Cange Catalogue*, perhaps because it was part of an *Ordo episcoporum* incorporating the bishops' dioceses of Constantinople, Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and "Bulgaria's archbishops," i.e., the archbishopric of Ohrid (listed sixth). The *Catalogue* is extant in two manuscripts: Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, Ms. gr. 880, and Moscow State Museum of History, Synodal Collection, Codex Gr. 286 (Vladimir 324).

This inquiry will use the *Catalogue* to examine the relations between the archbishopric of Ohrid and the see known as Justiniana Prima, and will attempt to construct an annotated chronological sequence of the incumbents of the archbishopric of Ohrid in the period covered by the *Catalogue*.

The Paris Manuscript

The Paris manuscript was documented by Omont² and then Jubinković.³ It is on paper and in good condition. It was first mentioned in 1632 when the librarian

¹ J. Darrouzès. *Les Notitiae episcopatum ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*. Paris 1981.

² H. Omont. *Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, I. Paris 1898, 165: Paris, gr. 880, 320 x 215 mm. – Niconis monachi pandectes (fol. 1), accedunt Timothei presbyteri et sceuophylacis magnae ecclesiae libellus de proselytis (fol. 399) et Methodii Cp. patriarchae Constitutio des apostasis (fol. 402), Ordo episcoporum Cp., Romae, Alexandriae, Antiochiae, Hierosolymae et Bulgariae (fol. 402), Hymni in laudem beatae Virginis (fol. 408). XIII s., bombyc., 408 fol. (= *Mazar. Reg.* 1994).

³ P. Љубинковић. *Ordo episcoporum у Paris. Gr. 880 и архиепископска помен листа у синодикону цара Борила*. I. Скопје 1970, 131–47; Idem. "Paris, gr. 880 – датум, садржај, тенденције". *Старинар*, 20 (1969/1970), 191–202

at the Paris Royal Library, Nicolas Rigolte, recorded it as *Cod. Reg. 2423*. In 1682, Nicolas Clement compiled a new catalogue, providing the manuscript with a new number (*Mazarin. Reg. 1994*), recording it as part of Cardinal Mazarin's library. A Greek inscription on fol. 46 indicates that the manuscript once belonged to the monastery of Meteor: βιβλίον τοῦ Μετεώρου.

The reverse page of the first unnumbered folio features an inventory by Jean Baptiste Cotelier (1627–1686), who was assigned to list the Greek manuscripts at the Royal Library.⁴ At the bottom of the same folio there is a note by François Sevin (1682–1741), who dated the manuscript to the thirteenth century. The manuscript obtained its current call number (*Paris, Ms. gr. 880*), when the French National Library succeeded the Royal Library. It contains 408 folios, of which fols. 402a to 408a are the *Ordo*, and only two of its pages, 407b and 408a, refer to the archbishopric of Ohrid.⁵

The Paris manuscript has been repeatedly published since the seventeenth century. Its first publisher was Charles Du Fresne Seigneur Du Cange (1610–1688),⁶ a prominent French Byzantinist from whom the *Catalogue* received its name. Du Cange compiled a collection on the history of France, and published a number of Byzantine chronicles as well as other historical and legal works. Du Cange also put together two multi-volume Latin and Greek (Byzantine) encyclopedic dictionaries. His best-known works include *Histoire de Constantinople*, published in French in 1657, and *Historia Byzantina* published in Latin as part of the *Corpus Parisinum* in 1680. The *Catalogue* was published as a supplement to *Historia Byzantina*; in 1749, it became part of what is known as the Venetian Corpus.⁷ A photo-type reproduction of the seventeenth-century edition appeared in Brussels in 1964.

In 1740, the *Catalogue*, which had already taken the name the *Du Cange Catalogue*, was again published, this time in *Oriens Christianus*,

⁴ An obvious omission from this inventory is the hymn to Virgin Mary on page 408b of the manuscript.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 196–7. In regard to this information, Ljubinković also refers to Marie-Louise Concasty, a conservator at the Manuscript Department of the Paris National Library.

⁶ About Du Cange, see: P. Займова. „Предговор”. In: Ш. Дюканж. *Византийска историја. Историја на империјата на Константинопол*. Софија 1992, 5–28 (with bibliography). The full title of *Historia Byzantina* is: Du Fresne du Cange Ch. *Historia Byzantina duplici commentario illustrata. Prior familias ac stemmata imperatorum Constantinopolitanorum*. Lutetiae Parisiorum 1680. (The *Paris. List* is on pp. 174–5.)

⁷ In fact, the Venetian publication of the Byzantine texts is a re-print of the *Corpus Parisinum*.

by the French Dominican Michel Le Quien (1661–1773), who taught theology and was librarian at the abbey of Saint Honoré.⁸ Le Quien’s work is dedicated to church geography, specifically to the eparchial lists of the Church of Constantinople. Alongside the original text of the *Catalogue*, Le Quien provided a comprehensive commentary. Le Quien has been criticized as a flawed historian and has often been accused of bias and of inserting “dogmatic or apologetic digressions.”⁹ For example, he incorrectly started the list of the archbishops of Ohrid with Silvestre and Gabriel, although he might have inferred this from Anastasius the Librarian (whom he called Guillelmus Bibliothecarius) and his story of the appointment of the deacon Silvestre as the first leader of the Bulgarian church.¹⁰ The *Catalogue* also refers to a Germanos-Gabriel who was a contemporary of Tsar Samuel. Le Quien also argued that, while there was a signature of “Gabriel of Ohrid” present at the Council in 879–880, it was not the signature of an archbishop of Ohrid. Next, Le Quien lists a certain Archbishop George, who was the first hierarch of the Bulgarian church and seems to have occupied the see prior to 876, as the third incumbent in Ohrid. There is substantial information about George’s diocese to suspect the veracity of this assertion. For example, a letter by Pope John VIII from 878 says that a Sergius wrongfully ascended to the throne of the Belgrade bishop, which implies that in this region the Roman Church had the final say in these matters, even though the lands were already within Bulgarian borders.¹¹ Le Quien also provided a passage on Methodius found in the *Catalogue*, where he is referred to as “bishop of Moravia Pannonia” to substantiate his claim that Cyril and Methodius gave the Bulgarians the “fundamentals of Christian faith.” Indeed, the *Catalogue* does state that Methodius was an archbishop of Ohrid and that the two brothers were present in person in Bulgaria. Finally, fourth in the list of archbishops in Le Quien’s publication is a certain disciple of Methodius named Conrad. The author

⁸ M. Le Quien. *Oriens Christianus*, Paris 1740, II: 287–290. Here the manuscript was erroneously marked as No.1004 instead of No.1994. About Le Quien, see: S. Salaville. “Le II^e centenaire de Michel Le Quien.” *Echos d’Orient*, 30 (1933, Juillet–Septembre), 257–266. A photo-type of *Oriens Christianus* was published in Graz in 1958.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 263

¹⁰ See: *Латински извори за българската история* [= *Fontes Latini Historiae Bulgaricae*, hereafter *ЛИБИ*]. София 1960, II: 194.

¹¹ See: Б. Николова. *Устройство и управление на българската православна църква (IX–XIV в.)*. София 1997, 52 and a commentary on pp. 122–3.

speculates that it might have been the aforementioned Silvestre. However, further down the text, where Le Quien explains that Conrad is a German name, it becomes clear that the author is actually referring to Methodius' Moravian pupil Gorazd. As a source for his information, Le Quien indicates Creyghtonus Anglus, whom he also quotes in a brief account of the aggressive action undertaken against Methodius by Bishop Viking of Nitra, an appointee of Pope John VIII. This is the last of Le Quien's interventions. From this point on, his list coincides with the Paris manuscript, although he places David after Philip.¹² With these additions, the number of archbishops of Ohrid in Le Quien's edition comes up to eighteen, whereas in the original *Catalogue* they number sixteen.

The Paris manuscript was published three more times in the twentieth century. In 1902 H. Gelzer's edited it with certain emendations;¹³ in 1931 Jordan Ivanov published it again.¹⁴ In 1968, based on these works, Vasilka Täpkova-Zaimova made a critical edition with a translation and commentary.¹⁵ As for the studies of the *Catalogue*, they are too numerous to be discussed here. It suffices to mention that the majority examine its significance as a source for the history of the archbishopric of Ohrid.¹⁶

The Moscow Manuscript

¹² David is not part of the list of first hierarchs of Ohrid, but his activities are well known and will be discussed further on.

¹³ H. Gelzer. *Der Patriarchat von Achrida*. Leipzig 1902, 6–7.

¹⁴ Й. Иванов. *Български старини из Македония*. София 1931, 562–4.

¹⁵ *Гръцки извори за българската история* [= *Fontes Graeci Historiae Bulgaricae*, hereafter ГИБИ]. София 1968, VII: 109–11.

¹⁶ See K. Krumbacher. *Geschichte der byzantinischen Literatur*. Berlin 1897, II: 1140; В. Златарски. „Български архиепископи-патриарси през Първото царство (до падането на източната му половина).“ *Известия на историческото дружество*, 6 (1924), 49–76; И. Снегаров. *История на Охридската архиепископия (от основаването ѝ до завладяването на Балканския полуостров от турците)*. София 1924, I: 195–8. (2nd phototype edition, Sofia 1995, with a foreword by I. Božilov, 5–16); В. Златарски. *История на българската държава през средните векове*. София 1927–1934, I: 226–8, 262–5, 529–31, 626, 632, 639, 702–3; *ibid.*, II: 17–19, 41, 263; Darrouzès, *op. cit.*, 180; I. Dujčev. “Saggi di storia politica e letteraria.” In: *Medioevo bizantino-slavo*. Roma 1971, III: 260–1; И. Дуйчев. „Дюканжов списък, Дюканжов каталог“. In: *Кирило-Методиевска енциклопедия* [hereafter КМЕ]. София 1985, I: 626–9; G. Moravcsik. *Byzantinoturcica*. Berlin 1958. I: 464; П. Петров. „Охридската българска архиепископия (1018 – 1797)“. *Македонски преглед*, 22:3 (1999), 11–34; И. Илиев. ”Охридският Архиепископ Димитър Хоматиан и българите“. София 2010, 49 – 55.

The second copy of the *Catalogue* is in the Moscow State Museum of History (*Synodal Collection No.286, Vladimir's Catalogue, No. 324*). To the best of my knowledge, it was first mentioned by V. Benešević in relation to his study on a *Nomocanon* written by John Komnenos, an archbishop of Ohrid who is listed in the *Catalogue*.¹⁷ According to Fonkič and Nystazopoulou,¹⁸ the Moscow manuscript can be dated to the late eighteenth century and is therefore later than the Paris manuscript. Christoidis believes that the Moscow manuscript may have originated in an Athonite monastery.¹⁹

The Moscow manuscript has been discussed by L. Stiernon²⁰ and the available information about it was summarized by K. Varzos.²¹ P. Gautier also referred to the Moscow list of archbishops in his first book on Theophylact of Ohrid.²² Out of the whole *Catalogue*, Gautier included only the Byzantine archbishops. He was skeptical about the authenticity of the first part of the *Catalogue* and added that the Moscow manuscript does not diverge from the Paris manuscript.²³ More recently, Slavia Bărlieva published an article with fresh observations based on her direct study of the manuscript.²⁴

Compilation of the *Catalogue*

As for the date of the *Catalogue*, L. Stiernon pointed out that the last name in the list is Archbishop Constantine, who attended a church council in Constantinople on 30 August 1170.²⁵ Ljubinković noted that the general *Ordo* – the list of the patriarchs of Constantinople, mentions Michael of Anchialos, the incumbent until March 1178. This establishes the *terminus ante quem* for the *Catalogue*, which can safely be assumed to have been compiled in the 1170s (since the council attended by Constantine was dated more accurately

¹⁷ В. Бенешевич. „Номоканон Иоанна Комнина, архиепископа Ахридского”. *Византийский временник*, 22 (1915/1916), 42–61.

¹⁸ In private communications with Vasilka Tăpkova-Zaimova.

¹⁹ In private communication with Vasilka Tăpkova-Zaimova.

²⁰ L. Stiernon. “Notes de titulature et de prosopographie byzantines (Adrien/Jean et Constantin Comnène sébastes).” *Revue des Etudes byzantines*, 21 (1963), 180–92.

²¹ Κ. Βάρζος. Η γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν. Θεσσαλονίκη 1994, I: 159–160.

²² Gautier, *op.cit.*, I: 29–30.

²³ *Ibid.*, 30, n.7.

²⁴ С. Бърлиева. “Дюканжов списък.” *Palaeobulgarica*, 3 (2000), 50–65.

²⁵ Stiernon, *op.cit.*, 181.

by Darrouzès to 1171 or 1176) in a context characterized by attempts to better the relations between Constantinople and the Western churches.²⁶

II. The Du Cange Catalogue and the Relations between the Archbishopric of Ohrid and What is Known as Justiniana Prima

The title of the *Du Cange Catalogue* as given in both manuscripts is “Archbishops of Bulgaria” (Οἱ ἀρχιεπίσκοποι Βουλγαρίας), thereby denoting the archbishops of the Ohrid as heads of an autocephalous church. Intriguingly, however, the *Catalogue* refers to “Justiniana Prima” as an archbishopric identical with that of Ohrid. However, an earlier catalogue provisionally entitled “Second Catalogue from the Time of Alexios Komnenos” and focusing mainly on the bishoprics dependent on the patriarchate of Constantinople, provides a supplement for the “order of the thrones of Justiniana Prima.”²⁷ In addition, what is known as *Neilos Doxopater’s Catalogue* of 1143 provides the following explanation: “Similar to the Cypriote church is the Bulgarian church, independent and insubordinate to none of the higher thrones, independently governed and consecrated by its own bishops. At first it was not called Bulgarian; then it was conquered by the Bulgarians and was given the name “Bulgarian.” It remained autocephalous due to the fact that the Bulgarians wrenched it out of the emperor’s power, i.e., from Basilios the Porphyrogenitus, and never acceded to the Constantinople Church. Therefore, even today the Cypriote and the Bulgarian churches get their bishops from the emperor but are consecrated by their own bishops, as it were, and they are called archbishoprics since they are autocephalous.”²⁸

This statement makes it necessary to consider the names attributed to the archbishopric of Ohrid and its status with regard to the patriarchate of Constantinople. A brief note by J. Darrouzès sheds light on the rating of top clerics in the Eastern Church: “In archaic titles, ‘autocephalous’ is synonymous to ‘archbishop’: the word means that an archbishop has become independent with regard to the metropolitan bishop in the diocese where his bishopric was consecrated; however, the autocephaly of Ohrid and Cyprus is

²⁶ Љубинковић, “Paris. gr. 880,” 199; J. Darrouzès. “Les documents byzantins du XII^e siècle sur la primauté romaine.” *Revue des études byzantines*, 23 (1965), 42–88, esp. 79–82 (as stated in Љубинковић, *op. cit.*, 199. n. 23).

²⁷ In: ГИБИ. София 1968, VII: 107.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 108.

conversely determined with regard to the bishoprics they are independent of by the force of imperial resolution.” Byzantine sources, therefore, describe the archbishopric of Ohrid as a successor to the autocephalous archbishopric established in 535, as announced in Novella 11 by Emperor Justinian I (527–565) and called Justiniana Prima.²⁹ The settlement of Justiniana Prima had been previously known as Tauresium, a town located in the province of Dacia Mediterranea, which also included Serdica, today’s Sofia. Where exactly it was located has been subject to debate. Most Western scholars identify it with today’s Skopje.³⁰ According to Jordan Ivanov, however, it was in the region of Kjustendil, near the village of Mošteni, on the Struma River.³¹ Honigmann assumed it was not far from Niš, near Caričin Grad, in an area that has been excavated.³² His position was adopted by several Serbian and other non-Western experts.³³

The establishment of the archbishopric of Justiniana Prima was

²⁹ H.-D. Döpmann. “Zur Problematik von Justiniana prima.” *Miscellanea Bulgarica*, 5 (1981), 222. For details on the birthplace of Justinian, elsewhere called Vederiana, see ГИБИ. София 1958, II: 156, where an excerpt from De aedificiis by Procopius of Caesarea is provided with commentary by Veselin Beševliev.

³⁰ Döpmann, *op. cit.*, 221–3. The archeologist from Skopje B. Alexova has again reverted to the localization of Justiniana Prima in Skopje. See: Б. Алексова. „Јустинијана Прима е на Скопската тврдина.“ *Вечер* (Скопје), 14 октомври 1999.

³¹ J. Ivanov (Џ. Иванов. *Северна Македонија*. София 1906, 21–2) has localized Tauresium as the birthplace of Justinian I, near the village of Tavličevo, and has identified the fortress of Vederiana as the birthplace of Justin II, near the locality of Mošteni under Kadin Most. He takes into account the information by Procopius in his *Historia arcana* ГИБИ. София 1958, II: 149. Another study on the subject by the same author is: Џ. Иванов. „Архиепископјата и градът Първа Юстиниана”. In: *Приложение на Църковен вестник за 1903 г.* София 1903, 110–39.

³² J. Zeiller. *Les origines chrétiennes des provinces danubiennes de l'empire Romain*. Paris 1918, 385–93; idem. “Le site de Justiniana Prima.” In: *Mélanges Ch. Diehl I*. Paris 1930, 299–304.

³³ For a detailed review of these and other opinions, see: Ф. Баришић. *Византиски извори за историју народа Југославије*, I. Београд 1955, 55–6; idem. „Досадашњај покушај убијације града Јустуниане Приме“. *Зборник Радова византолошког факултета*, 7:1 (1963), 127–42. Western scholars who support the identification of Justiniana Prima with Caričin Grad include: H.-G. Beck. *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich*. München 1959, 186; D. Claude. *Die byzantinische Stadt im 6. Jahrhundert*. München 1969, 105, 167–8, 179, 201, 243–4.. Cf. Др. Ј. Белчовски. *Охридската Архиепископија од основаването до паѓањето на Македонија под турска власт*. Скопје 1997, 174 sq. (*Архиепископи*).

an important stage in the development of the ecclesiastical system of Southeastern Europe. In 395, Emperor Theodosius I had divided the empire into an eastern part under the rule of his eldest son, Arcadius, and a western part ruled by his second son, Honorius. At that time, the dioceses of Dacia and Macedonia belonged to the eastern part. They became part of the prefecture of Illyricum, whose capital was Thessalonica. The western part included the Diocese of Pannonia, which also belonged to the diocese of Illyricum. From an ecclesiastical perspective, the prefecture of Illyricum was subordinate to Rome. It should also be noted that, from the fourth century onward, a “bishopric” signified the capital city of a province and, respectively, of an ecclesiastical diocese. In 412, for example, Pope Innocent I gave the metropolitan bishop of Thessaloniki the rank of a papal vicar.

The decades that followed, however, were marked by a certain hesitance in the relations between the Constantinopolitan church and the Roman Church. To what extent, then, can we assume that Justiniana Prima had been completely independent of Rome? Did its upswing mean it broke away from Thessaloniki’s supervision? The bishops of Thessaloniki were subordinate to the patriarchate of Constantinople. Döpmann explains that, following the death of Justinian I, Rome began to view Justiniana Prima as a Roman vicariate.³⁴ That said, it is known that Justinian I always tried to have the final word not only on the political development of the empire, but also on clerical appointments. To him, that was part and parcel of his ecumenical policies. In the early seventh century, however, Justiniana Prima disappeared from the historical sources. It is last mentioned in a letter of Pope Gregory I.³⁵ Still, it is noteworthy that while its establishment was important for the clerical and cultural policies on the Balkans, it was not the only city to have this prestige. Justinian I renamed about ten Eastern Byzantine towns “Justinianoupolis.” In Asia Minor, Justinian II built the town of Cyzicus in Nea Justinianoupolis (*Νέα Ιουστινιανούπολις*) where in the late seventh century he resettled a number of Cypriots. During the Third Ecumenical Council on 7 June 431, Cyprus’ autocephaly was pronounced precisely in the see of this Nea

³⁴ Döpmann, *op. cit.*, 228–9. When it was established, Justiniana Prima was also the seat of the prefect of Illyricum. Under its jurisdiction were the provinces of Moesia Prima, Praevalitana, Macedonia II, and parts of Dacia II. At the end of its existence, it encompassed the entire Pannonia II. For further details, see: *Историја српског народа*, Београд 1981, I: 104–5.

³⁵ About this letter, see: *ЛИБИ*. Софија 1958, I: 378.

Justinianoupolis.³⁶

Justiniana Prima became part of the Bulgarian territories when the Bulgarian borderlines expanded to the west. According to Ljubinković, the resolution about the status of the Bulgarian archbishops that was made at the Council in 879–880 was inspired primarily by the founding of Justiniana Prima by Justinian: the Bulgarian bishopric had an honorary place in the empire's hierarchy and it was the emperor and not the patriarch who was to make decisions on matters related to the city.³⁷ This held true since Justinian's time. Hence, Ljubinković's study traces the continuity between Justiniana Prima, the Bulgarian church, and the archbishopric of Ohrid, which extended to the eleventh–twelfth century. This issue was settled differently by Döpmann.³⁸ In his view, after Christianity was adopted in Bulgaria, there were no attempts to re-establish Justiniana Prima's position vis-à-vis Constantinople in the way it had been in Justinian's time. Döpmann attributes this to the fact that Justiniana Prima was considered a creation of a Byzantine emperor. The re-establishment took place later, when the Bulgarian lands became part of the Byzantine Empire, i.e. following Basil II's conquests. The first signature by an archbishop of Justiniana Prima belonged to John Komnenos in the acts of the Constantinople Council of 1157: Ὁ ταπεινὸς μοναχὸς Ἰωάννης καὶ ἐλέω ἀρχιεπίσκοπος α' (πρώτος) Ἰουστινιανῆς καὶ πάσης Βουλγαρίας ὁ Κομνηνός ὑπέγραψα.³⁹

Based on such indications, a number of studies identify Justiniana Prima with Ohrid. Authors like Zahariä von Lingenthal⁴⁰ and H. Gelzer⁴¹,

³⁶ Hiermonk Paul (Benedikt) Englezakis. „Community of St. John the Baptist. Essex. Cyprus, Nea Justinianoupolis.” In: *Sixth Annual Lecture on History and Archeology*. Nicosia 1990.

³⁷ Р. Љубинковић. „Традиције Приме Јустинијане у титулатури Охридских архиепископа“. *Старинар*, 17 (1966), 61–76.

³⁸ Döpmann, *op. cit.*, 230.

³⁹ Д. Цухлев. *История на българската държава*. София 1910, 905. Döpmann, *op. cit.*, 230. John (Adrian) Komnenos, who is also referred to further on, attended the Constantinople Council in 1157. See: Stiernon, *op.cit.*, 181, n.8, where the author refers also to Grumel (V. Grumel. *Les registres des Actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople. Socii Assumptionitae Chalcedonenses*, 1932-1947, nn. 1038, 1041, 1043). Cf: И. Снегаров. „Град Охрид. Исторически очерк.“ *Македонски преглед*, 4 (1928: 4), 106–7.

⁴⁰ К. Е. Zahariä von Lingenthal. “Beiträge zur Geschichte der bulgarischen Kirche.” *Mémoires de l'Acad. Impériale de St. Petersbourg*. Série VIIe: 8 (1864: 3), 1–36.

⁴¹ H. Gelzer. Ungedruckte und wenig bekannte Bistümverzeichnisse der orientalischen

among others, put emphasis on documents from Komnenos's time, as well as on evidence by thirteenth-century authors such as Theodoros Balsamon or Demetrios Chomatianos, and reports by Western chroniclers of crusades, such as William of Tyre, in order to emphasize that the idea for this double identity stems from the twelfth century. B. Prokić, among others, suggests that the identification of Justiniana Prima with Ohrid dates back to the time when the patriarchate of Bulgaria was moved from Dorostolon to Ohrid. He refers to Basil II's charter of 1020 and a passage by Michael of Devol in his supplement to John Skylitzes' *Chronicle*, which mentions that Basil II established the independent archbishopric of Ohrid. In his opinion, that was the case in the second half of the eleventh century, when Michael of Devol wrote his works and the appearance of Leon, "first of the Byzantines," as an archbishop of Ohrid in 1037 marked the separation of the archbishopric of Ohrid from the Bulgarian church.⁴²

These two "theories," as B. Ferjančić⁴³ calls them, were scrutinized by Vasil Zlatarski, who suggested that the first one was conceived at the end of the eleventh or in the early twelfth century, when the autocephaly of the Church of Ohrid was encroached upon by the Patriarchate of Constantinople, given by the possibility, at the turbulent time of the Norman invasions, to be attached to Rome.⁴⁴ Ferjančić considers the treatise by Neilos Doxopater as the end (*terminus ante quem*) of the first theory and the outset (*terminus post quem*) of the second theory, i.e. the later association of the archbishopric with Justiniana Prima.⁴⁵

With regard to the establishment and reception of Justiniana Prima, there is a comprehensive article by G. Prinzing,⁴⁶ who refers to a 42-line note entitled "Περὶ τῆς Πρώτης Ἰουστινιανῆς ἐκ τῶν μετὰ τὸν κώδικα νεαρῶν τίτλος β'

Kirche, 1 (=Byzantinische Zeitschrift, 1 (1892), 245–82); 2 (=Byzantinische Zeitschrift, 2 (1893), 22–72).

⁴² Б. Прокић. „Постанак Охридског Патриархата“. *Глас САН*, 90 (1912), 195–9.

⁴³ Б. Ферјанчић. „Нил Доксопатрид“. In: *Византиски извори за историју народа Јужне Славине*, III, Београд 1966, 363–5, with further bibliography.

⁴⁴ V. Zlatarski. "Prima Justiniana im Titel des bulgarischen Erzbischofs von Achrida." *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 30 (1929–1930), 484–9.

⁴⁵ Ферјанчић, *op. cit.*, 364.

⁴⁶ G. Prinzing. "Entstehung und Rezeption der Justiniana prima – Theorie im Mittelalter." *Byzantinobulgarica*, 5 (1978), 269–88, with further bibliography. About the publications of G. Prinzing, see. И. Илиев, *op. cit.*, 352.

διάταξις γ’.”⁴⁷ Prinzing’s study offers enough evidence to suggest that the note reflects the tendency to defend the independence of the archbishopric of Ohrid against the attempts by Constantinople (and I would add here Tărnovo) to target its autocephaly.

While I agree with that interpretation, I see the outset of the archbishopric at the time of Basil II, and in the context of his strained relations with Sergius, the Patriarch of Constantinople.⁴⁸ A note by Michael of Devol suggests as much: “He (the emperor) went by the orders of Emperor Justinian that it was Justiniana Prima...”⁴⁹ Basil’s charter of 1020 agrees with that and is a valuable source, even though it should be treated with caution since the authenticity of Emperor Basil II’s charters has been questioned and their statements need to be cross-checked against independent evidence.⁵⁰

III. The Archbishopric of Ohrid according to the *Du Cange Catalogue*

The Du Cange Catalogue lists archbishops of Ohrid from the fourth century to 1180s. This very fact indicates that the author was not certain exactly what the archbishopric was as an ecclesiastical entity. Moreover, the first and the second bishop in the *Catalogue* are separated by an interval of five centuries. Next come names from the ninth and tenth centuries, but no actual archbishops of Ohrid appear until almost the early eleventh century, when the catalogue gets more consistent. This, quite naturally, raises questions about the sources used by the compiler of the *Catalogue*. In what follows, I will identify these sources for each archbishop. For the early period, the author employed the records of the Council of Serdica and the church historians Socrates (380–440) and Sozomenus (end of fourth century – 450), who provide very detailed information about that council. The compiler seems to derive information also from prominent Byzantine authors from the end of the eleventh and the twelfth centuries, John Skylitzes and his interpolator, Michael of Devol, as well as

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 277. On the note, dated variously to the thirteenth–fourteenth century by different authors, see A. Tovar. “Nota sobre el arzobispado de Bulgaria en un manuscrito griego de Salamanca.” *Emérita*, 30 (1962), 1–7; G. de Andrés. *Catálogo de los códices griegos de la Real Biblioteca de el Escorial*, II. Madrid 1965 (370), 277.

⁴⁸ В. Тъпкова-Займова. „Превземането на Преслав в 971 г. и проблемите на Българската църква”. In: *1100 години Велики Преслав*, Шумен 1995, I: 172–81.

⁴⁹ Лубинковић, *op. cit.*

⁵⁰ Κωνσταντίνου ἡ Τέγου-Στεργιάδου Εὐ. Τά σχετικὰ με τὴν ἀρχιεπισκοπὴ Ἀχρίδας σιγίλια τοῦ Βασιλείου β'. Θεσσαλονίκη, 1988.

probably by Theophylact of Ohrid. It is reasonable to assume that the compiler of the *Catalogue* also had access to a diocesan list of the earlier period. While the second list from the time of Alexios Komnenos mentioned above features 23 bishoprics subordinate to Justiniana Prima, it does not include any the early incumbents. It is perhaps due to that reason that none of the scholars who have taken interest in the *Catalogue* has discussed its sources. In my opinion, the peculiarities of the *Catalogue* are indicative of certain independence in the process of compilation. To some extent, the unusual features of the *Catalogue* also explain its absence from the lists studied by Darrouzès.⁵¹

The *Catalogue* records Protogenes as the first archbishop of Ohrid, although he was actually archbishop of Serdica, which for a short period in the fourth century was the capital of Illyricum. During the council of Serdica (343 or 347), Protogenes was an ardent supporter of the Orthodox current in the church. This is evident from the *Catalogue*'s reference to his arguments about the Holy Ghost with the "philosopher," most likely Marcellus of Ankyra, who was originally an opponent to Protogenes but later reconciled with him.⁵²

The next archbishops listed in the *Catalogue* are followers of Methodius, referred to in the text as "the blood brother of Cyrillus Philosophus." Historians have dismissed the historical value of this part of the text on the grounds that it does not accord with the actual situation of the archbishopric. The text attests, however, to the fact that the memory of Cyril and Methodius and their tradition continued to circulate among local Byzantine writers, and the compiler of the *Catalogue* was no exception. In that respect, an important claim in the *Catalogue* is that Methodius was the actually present in the Bulgarian lands.⁵³

The names of Methodius, Gorazd, and Clement are listed in the *Catalogue* in sequence after Protogenes: a fact which highlights the compiler's intention

⁵¹ Darrouzès. *Les Notitiae.*, *op. cit.*

⁵² For the council see: „Текстове на църковните историци Сократ и Созомен“. In: ГИБИ, София 1954, I: 38-41, 52-5 (translated by V. Tāpkova-Zaimova and G. Tsankova-Petkova). For a general summary about Protogenes and the relations between the Eastern and the Western representatives at the Serdica Council, see: Marcellus von Ankyra. In: *Realencyklopädie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, Leipzig 1903, XII: 263; Hosius von Corduba. In: *ibid.*, Leipzig 1900, VIII: 379.

⁵³ Notably, the relevant entries of the *Cyrillo-Methodian Encyclopedia*, omit the *Du Cange Catalogue* as a source on the subject. See e.g.: Б. Ангелов, К. Иванова. „Вести за Кирил и Методий“. *Кирило-Методиевска Енциклопедия* [hereafter, *КМЕ*], I: 371–6; Л. Грашева. „Брегалнишка мисия“. *КМЕ*, I: 237–43.

to emphasize that, after the early period when Illyricum was subordinate to Rome, Methodius became the archbishop of “Pannonian Moravia” (Μοραβία τῆς Παννονίας), as stated in the *Life of Clement* by Theophylact of Ohrid.⁵⁴ In this, the compiler probably took in consideration the relations between Great Moravia and the Lower Pannonian principality after 867, when Prince Kocel worked for the establishment of an independent Moravian-Pannonian diocese. It is a known fact that on his trip back from Rome in 870, Methodius went to Prince Kocel at Blatnograd as a Moravian-Pannonian bishop.⁵⁵ Another note on Methodius in the *Catalogue* indicates that he was consecrated by Pope Nicolas “who was in Rome after Hadrian.” In fact, Pope Nicholas I (858–867) headed the Roman Church prior to Hadrian II (867–872). Dujčev

⁵⁴ ГИБИ, София 1974, IX: 14 (translated by I. Iliev). The compiler of the *Du Cange Catalogue* confuses the name of the country (Great) Moravia with the name of the town of Морав (Моравск). See: *Słownik starożytności Słowiań*. Warszawa 1967, III: 288–9: *Morav, Morawa (1), Morawa (2), Morawa (3)*; *Słownik języka starosłowiańskiego (Lexicon linguae palaeoslovenicae)*. Praha 1968, XVIII: 228, Морва, Моравьскъ. For the scope of Methodius’s archdiocese, see also: M. Eggers. *Das Erzbistum des Methods: Lage, Wirkung und Nachleben der Kyrillomethodischen Mission*. München 1994, 100–1. This author points out that the tradition existing in the Ohrid Archdiocese, according to which Methodius is one of the local archbishops, is crucial for potential claims by Ohrid to Moravia, which ruled over this region in ninth century. He mentions that Methodius was listed with the same title at the Council held in Tŭrnovo in 1211 according to Boril’s Synodicon (*Дринов пренис № 89*, see M. Г. Попруженко. *Синодик царя Борила*. София 1928, 77). In his latest study, Eggers (M. Eggers. *The Historical-Geographical Implications of the Cyrillo-Methodian Mission among the Slavs. Thessaloniki-Magna Moravia*. Thessaloniki 1999, 69) points out explicitly that Sirmium was the geographic center of Methodius’s archdiocese from 869 to 873, as well as after 873. Boba argues that Methodius’s entire diocese was located to the south of The Danube. About this assumption, see: I. Boba. *Moravia’s History Reinterpretation of Medieval Sources*. The Hague 1991, 85, n. 10. On the evolution of the archdiocese, see: J.-N. Nesbitt. *Oikonomides. Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art*. Washington 1991, I: 36a, 195; С. Пириватрић. „Византијска тема Морава и „Моравије“ Константина VII Порфирогенита”. *Зборник Радова византолошког Института*, 36 (1997), 199–202; Ј. Максимовић. „Организација византијске власти у новоосвојеним областима после 1018 године“. *Зборник Радова византолошког Института*, 36 (1997), 31–42.

⁵⁵ Г. Сотиров. „Моравска мисија“. In: *КМЕ*, II: 737; idem, „Велика Моравия“. In: *КМЕ*, I: 351; Николова. „Св. Методиј“. *КМЕ*, II: 642: the article elucidates Methodius’s appointment to lead the Illyricum Archdiocese, which existed until the sixth century. Based on this, the compiler of the *Du Cange Catalogue* considers Methodius as a kind of a successor to Protogenes.

attributed this to a mistake made by the copyist,⁵⁶ and his opinion is shared by other scholars.⁵⁷

I already mentioned Gorazd in connection to Le Quien's edition of the *Catalogue* and the way his name and personality were perceived in the eighteenth century. The note in the *Catalogue* that he was "consecrated by Methodius" demonstrates the familiarity of the compiler with the activities of this well-known disciple of Cyril and Methodius.⁵⁸

The *Catalogue* records that Clement was previously a "bishop of Tiberioupolis or Velika," where he had been sent by the *basileus* of the Bulgars, Boris.⁵⁹ The very title assigned to Boris already indicates that the source of the *Catalogue* must date no earlier than Symeon's time, when the Bulgarian ruler adopted the title of "tsar." More likely, however, it goes back to the time of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom. The name "Tiberioupolis" (i.e. Strumica) comes from the "Martyrdom of the Fifteen Martyrs of Tiberioupolis," whose author was Theophylact of Ohrid.⁶⁰ The *Life of Clement* by Theophylact of Ohrid notes that Symeon raised him (ca. 893–894) to the rank of a "bishop of Dragavista or Velitsa."

The topography related to Clement in the *Catalogue* has been subject to numerous inquiries. Some locations, like Kanina, a small town southeast of Valona, 2–3 km from the sea, are easy to identify. Others, like Tassipiat, have never been identified; notably, this town cannot be found in the other diocesan lists. As for Βελίκα, Georgi Balaščev associated it with a tributary of the Vardar River (nowadays, the Velika River), which runs through the plain of

⁵⁶ Дуйчев, „Дюканжов списък“, 627.

⁵⁷ See e.g.: Иванов, *Български старини*, 565, п. 1.

⁵⁸ About Gorazd, see: А. Милтенова. „Горазд“. *КМЕ*, I: 513–4. For Gorazd's activities as a disciple of Methodius, see: Д. Калев. *Св. Горазд – славянски просветител*. София 1970. The author assumes that Gorazd reached the Bulgarian lands after the Cyrillo-Methodian disciples were chased away. Theories about the last years of his life suggest that he settled in Berat (Albania) or perhaps found refuge in Poland. For up to date references on Methodius, Gorazd and Clement as archbishops of Ohrid, see the respective entries of in *Кирило-Методиевска Енциклопедия*. 4 тома. София 1985–2003.

⁵⁹ For the titles of the Bulgarian rulers after the conversion to Christianity, see: Г. Бакалов. *Средновековният български владетел (титлатура и инсигнии)*, 2. изд. София 1994, 102.

⁶⁰ *ГИБИ*, София 1968, VII: 31.

Kičevo. The same scholar suggested that the diocese of Clement was located to the north of Ohrid and encompassed Debărca, Kičevo, and Polog.⁶¹ Jordan Ivanov assumed that the fortress Δευρέτη, which belonged to the bishopric of Bitola, was located to the northwest of Prilep, at the opening of the pass to the plain of Kičevo.⁶² Vasil Zlatarski also agreed with the association of Δευρέτη (Debrešte) with the town of Devrita; as for Velitsa, he believed that it should be identified with today's Velitsa, to the south of Kičevo and that explained Clement's dual bishop's title.⁶³ Ivan Snegarov makes a number of assumptions, concluding that Clement's title encompassed the names of the diocesan capital Debrišta in the region of Tikvesh and the district of Velika (after the Old Bulgarian name of the Vardar River).⁶⁴ Gautier leaves aside the issue of Velitsa and assumes that Clement's diocese did not have a permanent capital.⁶⁵ Indeed, the name of Clement's diocese has been repeatedly associated with the names of the Slavic tribe of Drougoubitai and the Velikia area in the Rhodope Mountains. Most recently, P. Koledarov published a number of articles reviewing various opinions on these issues and argued that Clement's diocese was located in the southwestern Rhodope.⁶⁶ B. Nikolova rejected the hypothesis that the diocese

⁶¹ Г. Баласчев. *Климент, епископ словенски и службата му по стар словенски превод*. София 1898, XXVII–XXXII.

⁶² Й. Иванов. „Епархиите в Охридската архиепископия през началото на XI в.“. *Списание на БАН*, 1 (1911), 97–8.

⁶³ В. Златарски. „Де се е намирала епископията на св. Климента Охридски“. *Македонски преглед*, 1:1 (1924), 1–14.

⁶⁴ И. Снегаров. „Българският първоучител Климент Охридски“. *Годишник на Софийския университет „Климент Охридски“*. Богословски факултет, 4 (1927), 219–334; Idem. „По въпроса за епархията на св. Климент Охридски“. *Известия на Института за история*, 10 (1962), 205–23.

⁶⁵ P. Gautier. “Clément d’Ochrida évêque de Dragvista.” *Revue des études byzantines*, 22 (1964), 199–214.

⁶⁶ П. Коледаров. „Епархия на Климент Охридски.“ *КМЕ*, I: 655–62; idem. „Дрембица.“ *КМЕ*, I: 612–4; idem. „Климент Охридски, „първи епископ на български език“ на драговитите в Солунско и Великия в Западните Родопи“. In: *Константин-Кирил Философ. Юбилеен сборник по случай 1100-годишнината от смъртта му*. София 1969, 152–68 (on p. 165 the author claims that the title of Clement, according to the *Du Cange Catalogue*, is a proof that his seat was in Strumica – an assertion hardly convincing in view of the considerable liberty with which the authors of that time used geographical concepts). Most recently, see I. Iliev. “La mission de Clément d’Ochrida dans les terres sud-ouest de la Bulgarie médiévale.” *Études historiques*, 13 (1985), 62–4; idem. “The Long Life of Saint Clement of Ochrid. A Critical Edition.” *Byzantinobulgaria*, 9 (1995),

included the lands of the Drougoubitai and undermined the assumption that Clement's diocese was divided into two regions: one in the southwest districts where Velikia might have been, and another to the west, toward Ohrid. Thus, she comes close to the location suggested by Balašček.⁶⁷ As to the reference in the *Catalogue* to "the third part of the Bulgarian kingdom," I tend to agree with Ivan Venedikov, who reviewed the administrative structure of the Bulgarian lands until the end of the tenth century and stated that that "third part" belonged to the lands of Macedonia.⁶⁸

115–6.

⁶⁷ Б. Николова, *op. cit.*, 78–85; cf. И. Добрев, „Бил ли е Климент Охридски епископ на Драговишица?“ *Старобългарска литература*, 3 (1983), 36–40. She excludes Ohrid from St. Clement's diocese, regardless of the fact that he also built a church there. See also the bibliography included by К. Stančev (Кр. Станчев, „Климент Охридски“. *КМЕ*, II: 323–325). Most recently, R. Ljubinković (Љубинковић, *Ordo episcoporum*, 98) suggested that Gorazd did not have any official title, but because he was a disciple of Methodius and thus likely to assume the archbishopric of Moravia Pannonia he was assumed to have had the title. However, because the second disciple of Methodius, Clement, must have been only a bishop of Tiberiopolis, i.e. Velika, it is difficult to support such an assumption without any additional evidence. On the other hand, the suggestion by the same author that Boris entrusted him not only with the diocese of Tiberiopolis (Velika), but also the "third part" of the Bulgarian kingdom, i.e. that Clement assumed administrative authority, seems plausible. В. Алексова (Б. Алексова, „Св. Климент - организатор на првата словенска епископија во Македонија“. In: *Светите Климент и Наум Охридски и придонесот на Охридскиот духовен центар за словенската просвета и култура. Прилози од научен собир одржан на 13-15 септември 1993*. Скопје 1995, 143–52) locates this diocese in the town of Raven on the Bregalnica River, near the village of Krupišta, i.e. according to her, it must have been on the territory of Justiniana Prima. А. Delikari (А. Delikari, *Der Hl. Klemens und die Frage des Bistums von Velitz. Identifizierung, Bischofsliste /bis 1767/ und Titulaturbischofe*. Thessaloniki 1997, 54, 67) believes that Velitsa should be identified with a town in the vicinity of Ohrid and she states her preference for Veles. She also adds a list of later bishops called "Of Veles". The most recent study is by Т. Krăstănov (Т. Кръстанов, „Нови извори за св. Климент Охридски Чудотворец: епископската му столица Велика = Велеград = Берат и датата на смъртта му – 26 юли 916 г.“. In: *Дни на науката на Република България и Република Македония (Научни доклади)*. София, 27–29 май 1999 г., 164–83), who looks for Clement's diocese in Berat, Northern Albania. А. Čilingirov makes an in-depth critical review of the issue of Clement's diocese and locates it near the Velika River (А. Чилингиров, *Църквата „Св. Герман“ до Преспанското езеро*. Берлин 2001, 101–3).

⁶⁸ И. Вenedikov. *Военното и административно устройство на България през IX и X век*. София 1979, 80. According to Ljubinković (*op. cit.*, 98–9), that "third part" is related to Clement's diocese, which was related to Rome and was outside the two parts that were probably under the authority of the Bulgarian Primate under Boris.

The fifth archbishop, according to the *Du Cange Catalogue*, was Damian. Here the compiler provided a more detailed account. He informs us that Damian had a seat in Silistra, referred to in the text by both its Latin name (Dorostolon) and its Greek name (Dristra). The reference to Damian had caused debate about the period of his life and the place of the residence of the Bulgarian patriarchs prior to the establishment of the archbishopric of Ohrid as an autocephalous entity. Vasil Zlatarski suggested that, prior to Damian, there had been a patriarch by the name of Dimitri who was succeeded by two more patriarchs, Sergius and Gregorius. He based that claim on information from the Bulgarian *Synodikon*.⁶⁹ As to the seat of the Bulgarian patriarch, some historians of the older generation thought it had been in Drăstăr from the very beginning, since Drăstăr was an old church center.⁷⁰ However, most modern historians think that the original residence of the Bulgarian church leader was in Pliska, then, after the Council of 893, in Preslav, and only moved to Drăstăr after 927, when Byzantium recognized the title of Petăr as tsar and that of the Bulgarian prelate as a patriarch.⁷¹ Nikolova argues compellingly that this occurred between 934 and 944, referring to a *Taktikon* published by Benešević, which was compiled at that time.⁷² In my view, what is known as

⁶⁹ В. Златарски. „Български архиепископи-патриарси”, 14–22; idem., *История*, София 1927, I:2, 529–30. Ljubinković (*op. cit.*, 89; Idem. “L’Illyricum et la question romaine à la fin du Xe et au début du XIe siècle.” In: *Chiesa Greca in Italia dall’ VIII al XVI secolo*. Padova 1973, 941) thinks that the compiler of the *Du Cange Catalogue* did not take into account the Damian’s removal from the Bulgarian patriarchal throne by John Tzimiscēs, keeping in mind that the emperor’s act could not have been valid in the lands ruled by Samuel. About the hesitations on these issues in the light of the attitude toward the Roman Church and its rights over the provinces of Illyricum, see also С. Пириватрић. *Самуилова држава*. Београд 1998, 150–2.

⁷⁰ Е. Голубинский. *Краткий очерк истории православных церквей*. Москва 1870, 37.

⁷¹ Златарски, *История*, II: 203; Снегаров, *История на Охридската архиепископия*, I: 8–12; П. Мутафчиев. *Избрани съчинения*. София 1973, 47–8; Г. Атанасов. „Дръстър и патриаршията на Първото българско царство.” In: *Дуросторум–Дръстър–Силистра (Сборник изследвания)*. Силистра 1988, 135–48. Cf. also: Бакалов, *op. cit.*, 113–14; Събев, *op. cit.*, 245–9, where the author elaborates upon his view that the failure to mention the predecessors of Patriarch Damian, who are present in Boril’s *Synodikon*, in the *Du Cange Catalogue* is due to the fact that they were not officially recognized by Byzantium. G. Prinzing and S. Angelova (in a private communication with the author) think (based on archeological excavations) that Damian was buried in the basilica at the northern fortified wall of Drăstăr.

⁷² Николова, *op. cit.*, 44–45.

the autocephalous archbishopric of Bulgaria in the diocesan list from the time of John Tzimisces has nothing to do with that emperor but is related to a later period and the status of the archbishopric of Ohrid after 1018.⁷³ In any case, we have a patriarchate with a capital in Drăstăr which, as Tarnanidis and Podskalsky argue, could have been added to the five patriarchates of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Antioch, and that was autocephalous but with a smaller province. Tarnanidis, however, most likely errs in considering the title of the Bulgarian patriarch “a honorary distinction,” which did not constitute a “compulsory legal extension of the Bulgarian patriarchate.”⁷⁴ That last we hear about Damian is that Emperor John Tzimisces removed him from the patriarch’s throne in Drăstăr after he presumably held this post for 30 to 40 years. The chief prelate’s seat was then moved from Preslav to Serdica, where the residence of the eldest of the Comitopouli, Aron, was located; later it was moved yet again to Voden, Moglen, and finally Ohrid, Samuel’s capital.⁷⁵

Sixth in the *Catalogue* is German, also called Gabriel. Probably the former was his given name and the latter, his religious name. He was the first bishop in Voden and Prespa prior to his ascension into the archbishop’s throne.⁷⁶ German was buried in the church of a village carrying his name, the settlement of German in the region of Ressen. Konidaris assumes that German-Gabriel was the cleric who moved his seat to Voden, Moglen, and possibly Prespa, and that Philip settled in Ohrid during the reign of Samuel.⁷⁷ N. Mitsopoulos, the scholar in charge of the excavations in Prespa, which reveal the stay and, probably, the funeral of Samuel and provide good reason for associating the

⁷³ Тъпкова-Займова. „Превземањето на Преслав“, 172–81.

⁷⁴ I. X. Θαρνανίδης, I. X. Η διαμόρφωσις του αυτοκεφάλου της Βουλγαρικής εκκλησίας (864–1325). : Θεσσαλονίκη, 1976, σ. 82. See also the critical note by Nikolova, *op. cit.*, 45, 51, n.44, who does not agree with Tarnanidis’s opinion that the title of the Bulgarian patriarch was “honorary” and that only the fact about the autocephaly of the Bulgarian Church under Tsar Petăr is explicit. Cf. also G. Podskalsky. “Die Organisation der bulgarischen Kirche nach der Taufe des Fürsten Boris-Michael.” *Études Balkaniques*, 1 (1990), 55–6.

⁷⁵ М. Войнов. „Преслав, Средец, Охрид – три средновековни града на български царе и патриарси“. *Исторически преглед*, 24:4 (1968), 72–6.

⁷⁶ Иванов, *Български старини*, 60; Снегаров, *История на Охридската архиепископия*, 26.

⁷⁷ Κονιδάρις, Γ. I. Σύμβολαί εις τήν εκκλησιαστικήν ιστορίαν τῆς Ἀχρίδος. Αθήναις 1967, 23, 67.

Bulgarian head of church with this place in Samuel's reign shares this view.⁷⁸

The seventh archbishop was Philip, who held the post in the period 1000–1015. The dates are determined in view of the activities of the next archbishop David, and the transfer of patriarchal power to Samuel's capital Ohrid.⁷⁹ This is the period when Ohrid was already an autocephalous archbishopric within the Byzantine administrative system. It is noteworthy, however, that both German–Gabriel and Philip are not mentioned in Basil II's charters. Most likely, this indicates a certain hesitance on the part of Byzantine authors to reflect the changes in the history of the Bulgarian church: the termination of its independence and its transition to the Byzantine church and administrative system. This is most explicitly stated in Basil II's second charter which reads, "Therefore, we order that Ohrid itself have an archbishop and a bishop be consecrated for Dristra."⁸⁰

The next known prelate of Ohrid, Archbishop David, chronologically comes after Philip but is omitted in the *Catalogue*. John Skylitzes notes that David was party to the plot to murder the Prince of Dioclea (Duklja), John Vladimir, Samuel's son-in-law. According to Skylitzes, David brought him the letter of safe-conduct from John Vladislav which lured him to his death.⁸¹ According to Todor Säbev, David's name is not included in the *Catalogue*

⁷⁸ Μουτζόπουλος, Ν. Βυζαντινά άρθρα καὶ μελετήματα 1959–1989. Θεσσαλονίκη 1990, σ. 323. The most recent publication on the Prespa Basilica: Μουτζόπουλος, Ν. Η βασιλική τοῦ Ἁγίου Ἀχιλλεῖου στὴν Πρέσπα. Θεσσαλονίκη 1999; and the Bulgarian version: Н. Муцопулос, Базиликата „Св. Ахилий „ в Преспа, Един исторически паметник – Светиня, Пловдив 2007.

⁷⁹ Събев, *op. cit.*, 262–3; И. Снегаров, „Първата българска патриаршия“, 1. (= *Годишник на Софийския университет „Климент Охридски“*, Богословски факултет, 26 (1949), 29, 30); 2 (= *Годишник на Духовната академия*, 1 (28) (1951), 15–23). Säbev says that, while some historians include in the series of Bulgarian first hierarchs of the Ohrid Archdiocese a Nicholas, whose name is referred to in the concise *Life of Ivan Vladimir*, he is averse to accept the presence of such a cleric. As to the older names of Ohrid, dating back to ancient times, see И. Снегаров, *Град Охрид*, 93–94. This author provides the following explanation: in antique times, Ohrid was the center of district Desaretia populated by the Illyrian tribe Dassaretia. In the *Du Cange Catalogue*, there is a probable confusion between Dassarita and Sassaripa. As to the name Lichnis, it is associated with the clear waters of the Ohrid Lake.

⁸⁰ ГИБИ, София 1965, VI: 45.

⁸¹ Skylitzes, *op. cit.*, 354 (= ГИБИ, София 1965, VI: 288.)

because of his complicity in the assassination.⁸² This could hardly be the case: it is Skylitzes again, who informs us that in 1018, David was sent by John Vladislav's widow, Maria, to Basil II to assure the emperor that she would leave Bulgaria if compensated appropriately.⁸³ It appears that David supported the capitulatory policy of Samuel's relatives. Therefore, there is no reason why a Byzantine church list should demonstrate a negative attitude toward him by omitting his name. This is yet another example of uncertainty about the exact order of the clerical leaders during the last days of the First Bulgarian Kingdom.⁸⁴

The eighth archbishop listed in the *Catalogue* is thus John of Debăr, who had been abbot of the monastery of the Virgin at Debăr. John's birthplace, Agnoandiki (a Greek toponym) has not been identified. Skylitzes's *Chronicle*, with Michael of Debăr's supplement can assist us here. The first publisher of the Skylitzes' Vienna manuscript, which features these supplements, suggested that the head of the church during the conquest of Bulgaria was exactly John of Debăr.⁸⁵ However, Zlatarski argued that the supplements to the Vienna manuscript date back to the thirteenth or the fourteenth centuries, i.e., they are later than the *Catalogue*.⁸⁶ The Vienna manuscript reads: "John the Bishop" (Ἰωάννου τοῦ ἀρχιερέως),⁸⁷ and the name "David" is substituted by "John." In the same vein, Basil's first charter mentions John as "archbishop of Bulgaria" after its conquest.⁸⁸ All this indicates that Zlatarski was correct in suggesting that John should be considered the last Bulgarian head of church

⁸² Събев, *op. cit.*, 262.

⁸³ Skylitzes, *op. cit.*, 357.

⁸⁴ About the alternation of Damian and David and the reduction of the title of Bulgaria's first priest, see Κωνσταντίνου ἢ Τέγου-Στεργιάδου, *op. cit.*, 73–5.

⁸⁵ B. Prokić. *Die Zusätze in der Handschrift des Joannes Scylitzes Codex Vindobonnensis hist. graec LXXIV. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des sog. westbulgarischen Reiches.* Diss. München 1906, 24–5.

⁸⁶ В. Златарски. „Кой е бил български архиепископ в Охрид при покоряването на България от Василий II“. *Християнска мисъл*, 2:7 (1909), 464.

⁸⁷ Skylitzes, *op. cit.*, 354, n. 69 (= ГИБИ, София 1965, VI: 288.)

⁸⁸ ГИБИ, София 1965, VI: 41. An afterword in "St. Antonius's Life" published by Б. Ангелов. *Из старата българска, руска и сръбска литература.* София 1967, II: 13, mentions a "John Gospodin, our archbishop who was the patriarch of the Bulgarian lands." I will discuss the range of opinions on the identification of that person elsewhere.

since right after him the *Catalogue* mentions a person defined as “first of the Byzantines.”

The “first of the Byzantines” (*Rōmaioi*) was Leon, who is listed ninth among the archbishops of Ohrid. This manner of specifying identity is quite unusual for the Byzantine writers. Typically, all subjects of the Byzantine Empire and not just persons belonging to the “Hellenic” (“Greek”) nationality were defined as “Byzantines” (*Rōmaioi*).⁸⁹ However, the identification here is justified as it differentiates the Bulgarians, up to that point the only ones on the list from the “Byzantines,” who now represented the Byzantine administration.

The next prelate, Leon, became archbishop of Ohrid apparently in early 1037.⁹⁰ Michael of Debăr, who supplemented the chronicle by John Skylitzes, provides the following information about him: “When the Bulgarian archbishop John died, the emperor appointed another one who came from Paphlagonia and had gained distinction in the Great Church and served as a *chartophylax* for many years. Because of his love for the *hesychia* and since the divine service was not well performed, in his willingness not to show himself hostile to the patriarch, he practiced *hesychia* and lived the life of a hermit. He was called Leon and mastered all the secular and spiritual knowledge. During his service in Bulgaria, he left plenty of proof for his virtue.”⁹¹ As it becomes clear, Leon came from Asia Minor (Paphlagonia) and his nomination marked the beginning of the Byzantinization of the archbishopric.⁹² According to the *Catalogue*, now the archbishops came from the higher circles of Constantinople’s clergy and were nominated by the emperor himself.⁹³ While initially Leon was only a chief archivist at the

⁸⁹ D. Zakythinos. “Continuité de l’Empire Romain à Constantinople: 330-1453.” In: *Da Roma alla terza Roma*, II (La nozione tra cittadinanza e universalità). Napoli–Roma, 1984, 241–5.

⁹⁰ P. Gautier. *Theophylacti Achridensis Opera*, I: 30–1.

⁹¹ Skylitzes, *op. cit.*, 400 (= ГИБЛ, София 1965, VI: 300.) I have altered slightly the Bulgarian translation of this page, taking in consideration P. Gautier’s translation.

⁹² For a note of caution regarding overstatements about the policy of Byzantinization of Bulgarian lands, see G. Litavrin. “Les conditions de développement de la culture bulgare aux XI^e-XII^e siècles.” In: *Les rapports entre la France et les Slaves du Sud*. Paris 1983, 19–32.

⁹³ In his comprehensive account of the way the Ohrid archbishops were appointed., Zlatarski takes a note of different opinions on the appointment of Leon as the first hierarch of the

patriarchal library in Constantinople, he became one of the most prominent officials of the patriarch, a kind of a chief vicar,⁹⁴ and the designation “Great Church” in the *Catalogue* refers of course, to St. Sophia.⁹⁵ Archbishop Leon took an active part in the dispute with Rome on the issue of the unleavened bread. He supported the extremist wing among the Byzantine clergymen led by Patriarch Michael Cerularius, who criticized sharply the Western practice.⁹⁶

Empress Theodora, daughter of Constantine VIII, appointed the eleventh archbishop of Ohrid, Theodulos, in 1055–1056 when she ruled independently. The *Catalogue* notes that Theodulos had been the abbot of the monastery of St. Mokios. He was born in Tetrapolis in Iconium,⁹⁷ as stated in Skylitzes’s interpolated text: “But since the Bulgarian bishop Leon died, the monk Theodoulos who came from Iconium, from the town of Tetrapolis, was consecrated. He had been the abbot of the monastery of the St. Martyr Mokios and was completely unenlightened in the worldly wisdom but had mastered God’s wisdom to perfection and hence had drawn blessing and virtue.”⁹⁸ St. Mokios was most likely located in the western part of Constantinople, near today’s Altärmerçökubostan.⁹⁹ With the help of a certain John, son of Anço, so Skylitzes,¹⁰⁰ Theodulos built a second church in Ohrid, also called St. Sophia, in the upper town.¹⁰¹ It is again Skylitzes who provides information about

Ohrid throne. See Златарски, *История*, II: 42–3.

⁹⁴ About this post, see: L. Bréhier. *Les institutions de l’empire byzantin*. Paris 1949, 501–2.

⁹⁵ As to the construction of the Ohrid church “St. Sophia,” its eastern part was built, apparently, as early as the time of Samuel. See В. Н. Лазарев. „Живопись XI–XII вв. в Македонији“. In: *XIIIe Congrès International des Etudes byzantines. Rapports*. 5. Ohrid 1962, 105–15. Cf. n. 98.

⁹⁶ About him, see D. Stiennon. “Léon d’Achrída.” In: *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*. Paris 1976, LXI: 624–5.

⁹⁷ For details about him, see: Н. Скабаланович. *Византийское государство и церковь в XI в.* Санкт-Петербург 1884, 423.

⁹⁸ Scylitzes, *op. cit.*, 479 (= ГИИИ, София 1965, VI: 325.)

⁹⁹ R. Janin. *Constantinople byzantine*. Paris 1950, 198, 364.

¹⁰⁰ The name suggests that this was a Bulgarian local notable; see Ѓ. Займов. *Български именник*, 2. фототип. изд. София 1994, 10.

¹⁰¹ The first church of St. Sophia in Ohrid is dated to the end of the tenth century according to Н. Мавродинов. *Старобългарско изкуство*. София 1959, 264–7, fig. 317, 319–322. The second church was built by Archbishop Leon. See: A. Grabar. “Les peintures murales dans le choeur de Sainte Sophie d’Ochrid.” *Cahiers archéologiques*, 15 (1965), 257–65. About this church, cf. also: Ц. Грозданов. „Прилози познавању средњевековне

Theodulos's death: he ended his earthly existence when Patriarch Konstantin Lichudes died and John Xiphilinus ascended the patriarch's throne, that is, about 1063 or 1064, since Lichudes died in August 1063.¹⁰²

The see was then headed by John Lampinus or, as the continuator of Skylitzes notes, "the monk John of Lampi who was a follower and associate of Xiphilinus." He came from the town of Lampi in Phrygia and moved in the famous monastic circles in Olympus (Bithynia). Archbishop John's death is dated by the revolt of the dux of Dyrrhachium, Nicephorus Vasilakios, against Emperor Nicephorus Botaniates (1078–1081), to April 1078. Vasilakios, we are told by Skylitzes Continuatus, passed through Ohrid, where he wanted to be crowned emperor by Archbishop John Lampinos.¹⁰³ The latter, however, refused. The archbishop died soon after and Vasilakios's rebellion failed. For our purposes, John's refusal to crown Vasilakios is not as important as the information about the rights of the archbishop of Ohrid to crown the emperor.¹⁰⁴

In 1078 Emperor Nicephorus Botaniates appointed the twelfth archbishop of Ohrid, John Aenos,¹⁰⁵ former abbot of the unidentified monastery of

уметности Охрида". *Зборник за ликовне уметности*. Нови Сад 1966, II: 207; idem. „Проучвање на живописот на Света Софија Охридска". In: *Студии за Охридскиот животис*. Скопје 1990, 24–34. For further bibliography, see: Пириватрић, *op. cit.*, 156, п. 64; Чилингиров, *op. cit.*, 144–5.

¹⁰² This last part of Skylitzes's chronicle is considered to be "Scylizes Continuatus". See: E. Tsolakis., ed. *Ioannis Scylitzae Continuatus*. Thessalonique 1968, 117.

¹⁰³ Skylitzes Continuatus says, "After the death of the archbishop of Bulgaria, Theodulos, the emperor (Constantine Doukas) appointed monk John who came from Lampi and shared the monastery life and feats of Xiphilinos" (Iohannes Scylitzes Continuatus... p. 117). The town of Lampi, where that John came from, is in Crete. The phrase "Olympic mountains" in his account refers to the renowned monasteries in Bithynia. Patriarch John Xiphilinos occupied the patriarch's throne in Constantinople from 1064 to 1075 (See Златарски, *История*, II: 120–1). As Gautier points out (Gautier, *Theophylacti Achridensis Opera*, I: 32), Skylitzes notes that while Vasilakios was in Ohrid, Archbishop John Lampinus died and was succeeded by John Aenos. These events were dated to 1078.

¹⁰⁴ The same situation occurred again several decades later when Demetrios Chomatenos, the archbishop of Ohrid, crowned the ruler of Epirus, Theodore Komnenos, emperor (probably in 1227).

¹⁰⁵ The name of this Ohrid archbishop means he "did not drink wine" (i.e. was an abstainer). There is no further information about him. The Aritsiou Monastery has not been identified either. For his consecration, see the previous footnote. However, Zlatarski (Златарски, *История*, II: 262–3) suggests the year 1079.

Aritsiou. As P. Gautier points out, the year of John's appointment is in conflict with the assumption that Theophylact of Ohrid became an archbishop of Ohrid that same year. According to him, the *terminus post quem* for Theophylact's appointment at the thirteenth archbishop of Ohrid was a speech delivered in Constantinople before Alexius Komnenos on 6 January 1088. He considers as a *terminus ante quem* mid- or late 1092, when Theophylact addressed two letters to Sebastos John Doukas, the emperor's brother-in-law and a dux of Dyrrhachium.¹⁰⁶ Nothing more is known about John Aenos.

Theophylact of Ohrid, the thirteenth archbishop of Ohrid, is probably the most renowned person on the list. He was born in Euboea, sometime between 1050 and 1060. His family, about which little is known, was wealthy enough to send him to Constantinople where he studied with the renowned historian and philosopher, Michael Psellus.¹⁰⁷ In some documents, Theophylact has the patronym Ἡφαιστος, which, while inexplicable in a Christian context, was attributed also to other members of his family (e.g. the famous military commander Georgios Tornikes, whose mother was Theophylact's niece, had a secretary by the same name of Ἡφαιστος). Gautier points out a number of lemmas where this patronym is present; in one of them Theophylact bears the surname Bes.¹⁰⁸ The lemma is worth quoting at length since it also specifies Theophylact as the author of Clement's vita. It reads as follows: Βίος καὶ πολιτεία ὁμολογία τε καὶ μερικὴ θαυμάτων διήγησις τοῦ ἐν ἁγίος ἡμῶν ἀρχιεράρχου καὶ θαυματουργοῦ Κλήμεντος Ἀχριδόν (sic!), συγγραφεὶς παρὰ τοῦ μακαριωτάτου καὶ ἀοιδμοῦ ἀρχιεπισκόπου τῆς πρώτης Ἰουστινιανῆς καὶ πάσης Βουλγαρίας κυροῦ Θεοφυλάκτου τοῦ Βέσσου, χρηματίσαντος ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει μαίστωρ τῶν ρητόρων.¹⁰⁹ Theophylact was a prolific

¹⁰⁶ See: Gautier, *Theophylacti Achridensis Opera*, I: 32–3. According to Zlatarski (Златарски, *История*, II: 254), Theophylact went to Ohrid as archbishop in the fall of 1090.. His arguments are based on an analysis of the general political situation in the western parts of the peninsula and the appointment of John Doukas as a governor of the theme of Bulgaria in 1090; the latter was succeeded as a governor of Dyrrhachium by John Komnenos, son of Isaak Komnenos and nephew of Emperor Alexios I. More recently, I. Iliev identified the year 1089 as the beginning of the archbishop's post of Theophylact. However, he does provide no evidence in support of this (ГИБИ, София 1974, IX,2: 10.)

¹⁰⁷ Gautier, *Theophylacti Achridensis Opera*, I: 12.

¹⁰⁸ See Cod. Athos, Docariou 73, eighteenth century.

¹⁰⁹ Gautier, *Theophylacti Achridensis Opera*, I: 15, n. 19. The surname Bes here remains unexplained. It is known that in the early Middle Ages, the general term "Bessi" was used to denote the remnants of the Thracian population within the Byzantine Empire and

writer.¹¹⁰ I. Iliev published Theophylact's *Life of Clement of Ohrid*, his *Martyrdom of the Fifteen Martyrs of Tiberiopolis*, his letters, and other writings, within the series "Greek Sources of Bulgarian History."¹¹¹ Dimitri Obolensky's masterful "portrait" of Theophylact highlights his literary works and his place in the Byzantine cultural milieu.¹¹² P. Gautier also notes that the school of St. Sophia was not entirely ecclesiastical and taught a broader curriculum.¹¹³ It is unclear when exactly he died. Gautier suggests provisionally 1125–1126 as the years of his death.¹¹⁴

The fourteenth archbishop was a converted Jew, Leo Mung. Very little is known of him, except that, prior to his conversion, he had the name Judas and studied at the Jewish school in Thessaloniki managed by Tobias ben Eliezer.¹¹⁵

Michael Maximus was the fifteenth archbishop who, prior to his ascension to the throne, was an *ostiarius* (doorman). The *ostiarius* was a servant posted as a doorkeeper at the entrance of the church (St. Sophia in this case) to prevent non-Christians from coming in. These servants were selected among church readers: the chief *ostiarius* stood at the church gate whenever an archbishop was elected.

Some researchers of the older generation suggest that there were two archbishops after Michael Maximus. If so, those were omitted in the *Catalogue* and one can only speculate about the reason for the omission. Their names are given as Basil in 1132 and Eusthatus in 1134. Golubinski

not specifically representatives of the Bessi tribe. Theophylact, however, had nothing to do with these remnants of the Thracian population.

¹¹⁰ P. Gautier. 1. *Theophylacti Achridensis Opera* (Théophylacte d'Achrida. Discours, traités, poésies); 2. *Theophylacti Achridensis Epistulae* (Theophylacte d'Achrida. Lettres). Thessalonique 1986.

¹¹¹ ГИБИ, София 1994, IX,2. Within the same series, St. Mashev provided preliminary studies on his letters and the "Martyrdom of the Fifteen Martyrs of Tiberiopolis" ГИБИ, София 1974, IX,1, 80. For a commentary on the vita of Clement of Ohrid with a comprehensive bibliography, see. I. Iliev. "The Long Life of Saint Clement of Ohrid. A Critical Edition." *Byzantinobulgarica*, 9 (1995), 62–120.

¹¹² D. Obolensky. "Theophylact of Ohrid." In: *Six Byzantine Portraits*. Oxford 1988, 34–82. The same publication contains a "portrait" of Clement of Ohrid, as well.

¹¹³ Gautier, *Theophylacti Achridensis Opera*, I: 22.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 36–7.

¹¹⁵ I. S. Emmanuel. *Histoires des Israélites de Salonique*. Paris 1935, 34.

believed that they occupied the Ohrid throne, referring to the *Life of Hilarion of Moglen* by Patriarch Euthymius where these two names can be found.¹¹⁶ D. Tzuhlev even suggested that Eusthatus took part in a council in Constantinople in 1140.¹¹⁷ According to Snegarov, the name “Eusthatus” is actually a contamination of the name of Eusthatus of Thessaloniki, who lived in the second half of the eighteenth century. Zlatarski suggested that Michael Maximus occupied the archbishop’s throne of Ohrid from 1120 to 1141, and John Komnenos took over from him no later than 1142. In his view, Eusthatus could possibly be placed within this twenty-year interval.¹¹⁸

John Komnenos is the last archbishop included in the *Catalogue*. The information we have about him is also the most complete. Occasionally, the *Catalogue* is even listed under his name. His secular name was Adrian and he was the fourth son of Isaak Komnenos, the brother of Alexios Komnenos and Eirene of Alania.¹¹⁹ The latter was a relative of Empress Maria of Alania, spouse of Michael VII Doukas, and later of Nicephorus Botaniates. Several contemporary Byzantine authors mention John. He is described as a handsome man and a skilled rider, and enjoyed the admiration of his peers. His uncle, Alexios Komnenos, honored him with the rank of *pansebastos sebastos* (Alexios had expanded the range of court titles in order to favor his relatives. Thus, he added the derivatives *pansebastos*, *panypersebastos*, etc., to *sebastos*, as is in the case of John).¹²⁰ John Komnenos was also made *dux* of Chaldia, a *theme* on the south coast of the Black Sea. Known as an “angel in flesh,” John was recognized for his benevolence to the local population and the success in all his endeavors. When Emperor John Komnenos undertook a campaign to Cilicia in 1137–1138, his namesake, the future archbishop of Ohrid, accompanied him. Following the great victory at Antioch on 29 August 1137, he visited the holy places and took the monastic vows. Prior to that, he was married and had two daughters. He was consecrated archbishop

¹¹⁶ The information provided by Patriarch Euthymius, however, can hardly be considered a reliable source about events that occurred two centuries earlier in the western parts of the Bulgarian territories.

¹¹⁷ Д. Цухлев. *История на българската църква*. София 1910.

¹¹⁸ Златарски, *История*, II: 515–6 (Supplement No. 12 “Was there an Archbishop Eusthatus?”). Zlatarski presents a detailed account of all opinions on this issue.

¹¹⁹ About him, see: Stiernon, “Notes de titulature,” 179–98; Βάρζος, Κ. *Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν*. Θεσσαλονίκη, 1984, 159–69 (No. 28).

¹²⁰ Bréhier, *op.cit.*, 139.

of Ohrid in 1139 or soon after, but definitely prior to 1142.¹²¹ A notable detail of John Komnenos's life is the fact that he attended a church council in 1143, where two bishops were condemned as disciples of the Bogomils.¹²² The date of his death is not exactly known. Stiernon notes that an inventory of the monastery of the Virgin Mary the Merciful, near Strumica, dated 10 February 1164, mentions him as departed.¹²³ Since we know that he took part in a council on 12–13 May 1157, John must have died between 1157 and 1164.¹²⁴

The *Du Cange Catalogue* is one of the primary sources documenting the development of the archbishopric of Ohrid. In spite of the fact that it is not part of the official documents of the patriarchate of Constantinople and relates only to the western provinces of the Empire, it is among the most interesting diocesan lists now extant. It is of great value to the historians who study the relations between the Roman and Constantinople churches or the Bulgarian state and the Byzantine Empire. For that reason, since the time it was first published by the French humanist and Byzantinist, Charles Du Cange, it has continually drawn the attention of specialists both from East and West. The *Du Cange Catalogue* is also one of the few Greek sources, which provide information on the life and deeds of Cyril and Methodius.¹²⁵ Moreover, it is one of the very few reliable sources indicating the presence in person of St. Methodius in the Bulgarian lands. The *Catalogue* sheds light on the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition in the western part of the Balkan peninsula, mainly Macedonia, and the way this tradition was perceived in the ecclesiastical administrative system of Byzantium.

¹²¹ Stiernon, "Notes de titulature," 192.

¹²² P. Gautier. *Michel Italikos. Lettres et discours*. Paris 1972, 211; Βάροζος, Κ., *op.cit.*, 166.

¹²³ Stiernon, "Notes de titulature," 189–92.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 192; Βάροζος, Κ., *op.cit.*, 169, 295.

¹²⁵ In the list of Cyrillo-Methodian sources published by Mirčeva and Bărlieva, the *Du Cange Catalogue* is listed second amongst Greek sources. See Б. Мирчева, С. Бърлиева. „Предварителен списък на кирило-методиевските извори“. *Кирило-Методиевски студии*, 4 (1987), 512.



THE FIRST TWO CENTURIES OF THE ARCHBISHOPRIC OF OHRID

Iliya Iliev

Ohrid's emergence as one of Bulgaria's religious and cultural centers is usually associated with the troubled times in Bulgaria during the second half of the tenth century. However, this southwestern city was already growing in importance during the reigns of Prince Boris I and his son, Tsar Symeon the Great. Boris, who converted the Bulgarians to Christianity, appointed Cyril and Methodius' disciple, Clement, as a teacher in Kutmichevitsa, a military-administrative region which included Ohrid. Soon afterwards, the prince presented Clement with a "recreational place" in Ohrid, and since Clement liked the place very much, he built there the famous Monastery of St. Panteleimon with the ruler's support. In 916, Clement died and was buried at the monastery in a tomb he had prepared himself. After his death and especially after his canonization (which, according to modern experts, resulted from popular devotion), Ohrid acquired special significance for the medieval Bulgarians. Ohrid's prestige further increased when it became Bulgaria's capital during the reign of Tsar Samuel, and its significance was reinforced by a legend according to which Emperor Justinian I was born in the city and established the famous archbishopric Justiniana Prima there. This legend must have circulated in the region even before the Ohrid prelates of the Bulgarian Church wrote the legend's official version in the early twelfth century.¹

¹ This legend refers to Ohrid's (or Lychnidos's) Early Christian past. The city was a bishopric as early as the first half of the fourth century. For more details, see П. Шрайнер. „Охрид как церковный и политический центр.” In: *Культурните текстове на миналото. Носители, символи и идеи*. 1. *Текстовете на историята, история на текстовете. Материали от Юбилейната международна конференция в чест на 60-годишнината на проф. д.и.н. Казимир Попконстантинов, Велико Търново, 29–31 октомври 2003 г.* София 2005, 34–5. For the history of the city, see М. Ваклинова. „Охрид”. In: *Кирило–Методиевска енциклопедия*. София 1995, II: 893–99; G. Prinzing. „Ohrid”. In: *Lexikon des Mittelalters*. München 1993, VI: 376–1380; Г. Николов. *Централизъм и регионализъм в ранносредновековна България*. София 2005, 170–1, etc.

The earliest documents which associate Ohrid with Justiniana Prima – the autocephalous archbishopric whose headquarters were located in Emperor Justinian I's (527–565) native town – are two transcripts of John Skylitzes's *Synopsis historiarum*, which also contain Bishop Michael of Devol's additions of 1118. One of these additions (concerning the administrative measures which Emperor Basil II (976–1025) introduced into the defeated Bulgarian lands) reads:

"The emperor confirmed that the Bulgarian Archbishopric would be autocephalous as it had been before, at the time of the elder [or "old man"] Romanos [emperor Romanos I Lekapenos], after he learned from Emperor Justinian's [Justinian I's] ordinances that this was Justiniana Prima, to which Justinian referred as his birth place."²

It has been suggested that the note may have been added by transcribers other than the Bishop of Devol, because both manuscripts containing his own additions date back to the fourteenth century. More reliable evidence dates from the time of John Komnenos (before 1143 – ca. 1163) who, in 1157, signed a document as Archbishop of Justiniana Prima and all Bulgaria.³

The emergence and early history of the Archbishopric of Ohrid should be inserted in the context of the later decades of the First Bulgarian Kingdom, beginning with Peter I's reign,⁴ when Bulgarian political and military strength were on the wane. The decline resulted both from structural developments and the Bulgarian ruler's personal position. Peter's attitude was informed by the influence of his uncle George Sursubul and his political faction. Tsar

² Ioannis Scylitzae *Synopsis historiarum*, 365. Compare with my translation in В. Гюзелев. *Извори за средновековната история на България (VII–XV в.) в австрийските ръкописни сбирки и архиви*. София 2000, 56. I use the term "bishopric" rather than "archbishopric" because the translation is based on the Viennese transcript of the *Synopsis* which contains Michael of Devol's additions. By contrast, the manuscript of El Escorial uses the term "archbishopric." The additions in square brackets are made by I. Iliev.

³ See И. Снегаров. *История на Охридската архиепископия*. София 1931, 1: 85–86, 205; L. Stiernon. "Notes de titulature et de prosopographie byzantines: Adrien (Jean) et Constantin Comnène, sébastes." *Revue des études byzantines*, 21 (1963), 179–92; G. Prinzling. "Wer war der "bulgarische Bischof Adrian"?" *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 36 (1988), 552–7.

⁴ For the latest scholarly interpretation of these events, see И. Божилов, В. Гюзелев. „История на Средновековна България VII–XIV в.“ In: *История на България в три тома*. София 1999, 1: 308–38.

Symeon's policy of keeping the Byzantine Empire under constant pressure was replaced by a policy of peaceful, good neighborly relations, which implied mutual loyalty and support.

Explanations of this abrupt political shift vary. Generally speaking, all of them focus on the internal political difficulties with which both Bulgaria and Byzantium were grappling at that time. The difficulties led to negotiations for a thirty-year peace treaty between Bulgaria and Byzantium. The treaty, which was signed in 927, established conditions for an unequal relationship, which the Bulgarian state should not have allowed given that equality with Byzantium had become the status quo by the end of Symeon's reign. Instead, at the end of Tsar Peter's reign, his sons (his heir Boris and his brother Romanos) were sent to Constantinople to guarantee the peace. Even though they were treated as guests of honor, the event set a precedent in Bulgarian history. It was a clear sign of the unequal position in which Bulgaria had been placed. The less apparent, long-term consequences had deeper impact and laid the foundations for the eventual loss of Bulgaria's political independence.

By abandoning Symeon's active policy toward Byzantium and adopting peaceful relations, Peter enabled the Empire to focus on its internal problems and solidify its international position. At the same time, the barely concealed Byzantine interference in Bulgarian internal affairs (such as stirring up discontent among the nobility, assisting the Serbian prince's flight from Preslav, remaining ominously neutral as the Magyars raided Bulgaria from the north west, and intentionally steering Pecheneg raids to present-day Dobrudzha) drastically undermined the country's defense powers, making it an easy target for all kinds of invaders as well as for Byzantium's aggressive plans.

The gradual submission to Byzantium in the name of keeping the peace, therefore, is the major cause of the dynamic changes in Bulgarian politics and in the Bulgarian Church between the end of the tenth and the end of the twelfth centuries. In fact, the shift caused some of the most dramatic transformations in Bulgarian history. Only half a century after Symeon had proclaimed Bulgaria an empire (an act which Byzantium recognized during the reign of Symeon's successor, Peter I), the eastern half of the country, including the capital, Preslav, fell first under the rule of Prince Svjatoslav of Kiev and then under that of the Emperor John I Tzimiskes. During the following five decades, the struggle for control over the European Southeast

intensified. Until about 1000, Bulgaria and Byzantium were on relatively equal footing. But during the first quarter of the eleventh century, Byzantium gradually gained the upper hand and eventually took over the western half of the Bulgarian kingdom as well, with its capital Ohrid. Thus began the nearly two centuries of Byzantine rule in the Bulgarian lands, to last until 1185.⁵

The reign of the conqueror Basil II (976–1025) was followed by a long struggle for power among different groups of Byzantine elite, split between the Constantinopolitan and the provincial nobility. Negative changes in agricultural conditions also contributed to the internal instability of the Byzantine Empire. All of this taxed the Empire's military and political strength, leading to significant territorial losses. Robert Guiscard's Normans put an end to Byzantine rule in Southern Italy: Bari fell in 1071. That same year, the Empire suffered a drastic defeat from the Seljuks at Manzikert, losing a big part of Asia Minor as a result. In the western part of the Balkan Peninsula, the Serbian tribes gained independence and, in 1042, founded their own state with the capital at Zeta. Additionally, Byzantium's Balkan provinces endured devastating Pecheneg raids almost every year. The Byzantine territories were also raided by Uzes, Magyars, Serbs, and Normans. In addition, the Great Schism of 1054 had a particularly negative effect on Byzantium's international prestige.

The problems that plagued the Byzantine Empire's internal and international affairs affected considerably the Bulgarian lands as well. After Bulgaria's devastation during the first two decades of the eleventh century and its eventual defeat by Byzantium, the Empire introduced its own military-administrative and fiscal systems in its new provinces. Despite all measures taken and despite the demographic shifts and the subduing of the Bulgarian nobility, the Bulgarians' desire for freedom did not allow Byzantine rulers peace of mind. Two major uprisings of the eleventh century, which spread mostly in the western Bulgarian lands, one led by Peter Deljan and the other by George Voitech, manifested clearly Bulgarian strivings for independence;

⁵ For a historical overview of the Byzantine rule in the Bulgarian lands, see Божилов, Гюзелев, *op. cit.*, 341–418; Г. Острогорски. *История на византийската държава*. София 1996, 412–513. About the reign of the Macedonian Dynasty, following the reign of Basil II, see also Dimitrov in: И. Божилов, И. Билярски, Х. Димитров, И. Илиев. *Византийските василевси*. София 1997, 271–94. About the reign of the Doukas and Komnenian Dynasties, see *ibid.*, 295–334.

so did the revolts against the Byzantine rule launched by Nestor north of the Hemus Mountain, and by Leka and Dobromir in Serdica and Mesembria.

It was only under the Comneni who ascended to the throne in 1081, that internal stability gradually returned to the Empire. The Bulgarian resistance waned. Two generations had been born since Bulgaria had fallen under Byzantine rule and the Bulgarians had failed to use the strategic advantages provided by the Norman invasions (1081–1085) and the First and Second Crusades, which crossed the Balkan Peninsula at the end of the eleventh century and during the first half of the twelfth century. It took until the second half of the twelfth century, when transformations in Bulgarian society (especially of the Bulgarians living north of the Hemus Mountain range, whose political center was the future capital Tŭrnovo), as well as the Byzantine Empire's noticeable decline at the end of the Comneni's reign, enabled the emergence of a new independence movement. This movement eventually placed the first tsars of the Asenid dynasty on the throne of the restored Bulgarian state.

The Bulgarian Church experienced similarly dynamic, even though less radical, developments.⁶ Assuming that a kingdom would be incomplete without a patriarchate, Tsar Symeon had promoted the autocephalous Bulgarian archbishopric to a patriarchate. In 927, Byzantium formally recognized the Bulgarian Patriarchate in acknowledgment of Peter I's new rank. That condition held good even after the conquest of northeastern Bulgaria. The Patriarch of Preslav (or perhaps "of Drŭstŭr:" the issue has not yet been clarified) managed to move southwest to the territories of the independent Bulgarian kingdom, where he continued serving his Bulgarian flock. Trapped in the *force-majeure* situation that the Bulgarian-Byzantine conflict had caused, the patriarch's successors changed their residences on several occasions before finally settling in Ohrid, the last capital of the First Bulgarian Kingdom. This is where the victorious *basileus* Basil II found the patriarch as he conquered the last independent Bulgarian territories.

Once the conquest was over, Basil II largely refrained from structural

⁶For an overview of this period of the Bulgarian Church's history, see Снегаров, *op. cit.*, 63–88; Т. Събев. *Самостояйна народностна църква в средновековна България*. София 1987, 264–82; Божилов, Гюзелев, *op. cit.*, 365–82.

and governance changes in Bulgarian ecclesiastical affairs. The Bulgarian Church retained its autocephaly, the territorial scope it had obtained during the reign of the First Bulgarian Empire's last rulers, its division into dioceses, and the legal framework that regulated its activities. It was only demoted in status and had its patriarch removed. The Byzantine Empire could not allow competition with the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate within its territory. According to Basil II's *sigillions*, Byzantium had incorporated Bulgaria, and consequently the Bulgarian patriarchate was demoted to archbishopric. Likewise, to reinforce the message that the Bulgarian kingdom had been eliminated, Basil II had the surviving members of the Bulgarian royal family publicly stripped of the signs of their imperial status. The Bulgarian patriarch, whose dignity was equivalent to that of the ruling family, was forced to join the triumphant pageant upon Basil's return to Constantinople in 1019. The new head of the Bulgarian Church, which at that point was allowed the status of an autocephalous archbishopric with a see in Ohrid, became Ivan, the abbot of the Monastery of Debar, dedicated to the Holy Mother of God.

During the entire period of Byzantine rule of the Bulgarian lands – almost two centuries – the Bulgarian Church (which scholars refer to as “the Archbishopric of Ohrid”⁷) retained its rank and structure, as well as most of its dioceses. The only significant change was the appointment of Byzantine prelates in the positions immediately below that of the archbishop. It is possible that such appointments affected some, if not all, Bulgarian sees governed by the archbishopric. This seems the only logical reason why Ivan Snegarov, an eminent scholar of the archbishopric, defines the period from the archbishopric's emergence during the reign of Tsar Samuel to the Byzantine conquest of Bulgaria as “the Bulgarian period,” and the period between 1018 to 1334 (the year of Macedonia's unification with the Serbian state) as “the Byzantine period.” Likewise, Snegarov refers to the last decades of the archbishopric's history—those preceding the Ottomans' conquest of the Balkan Peninsula – as “the Serbian period.”⁸

In his introduction to the reprint of Snegarov's seminal work, Ivan Bozhilov suggests that “it would be more logical if the periodization [of

⁷ In his introduction to the second reprint of Ivan Snegarov's *История на Охридската архиепископия* (A History Archbishopric of Ohrid), Ivan Bozhilov draws special attention to how the available historical sources (written documents and seals that belonged to Ohrid archbishops) refer to the archbishopric: as “church of Bulgaria” (τῆς Βουλγαρίας).

⁸ Snegarov, *op. cit.*, 348–9.

the archbishopric's history] reflected the history of the Church itself rather than which nation controlled the Church at any particular time."⁹ Indeed, the archbishopric was an institution, part of the larger entity of the Christian Church, which followed its own laws and long-standing rules and which did not allow (or at least tried not to allow) secular powers to interfere with its workings. Moreover, as historians from the 1920s and 1930s have argued – both before and after Snegarov's work was published – the ethnic composition of its parishioners made the archbishopric a Bulgarian Church throughout its eight-century-long history.¹⁰ Therefore, from a scholarly perspective, it would be incorrect to define the lengthy history of the Ohrid archbishopric through the shifts in the political power on the territory of its dioceses.

Therefore, I propose the following division of the archbishopric's history:

- From the end of the tenth to the end of the twelfth century, when it was the only Church of the Bulgarians.
- From the end of the twelfth century to 1235, when it had the status of an archbishopric, and from 1235 to the beginning of the fifteenth century, when, promoted to patriarchate, it worked alongside the reinstated Bulgarian Church in the new Bulgarian capital, Tŭrnovo.
- From the beginning of the fifteenth century to its elimination by the Ecumenical Patriarchate at the end of the eighteenth century. During that period, the archbishopric was once again, at least nominally, the only Bulgarian Church. At that time, it worked alongside the Ecumenical Patriarchate, whose dioceses included one-third of all Bulgarians until the Bulgarian Exarchate emerged and gained legitimacy (1870–74).

However, this study is not concerned with the systematic analysis of the history of the archbishopric. Rather, I will attempt an analysis of the influence of the archbishopric and its Byzantine prelates on the historical development of the Bulgarian people from the beginning of the eleventh to the beginning of the thirteenth century, covering the emergence of the archbishopric out of the ruins of the Bulgarian Patriarchate in Ohrid to the restoration of the Bulgarian kingdom and the independent Bulgarian Archbishopric (and later

⁹ *Ibid.*, xiv.

¹⁰ Due to the influence of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Sultan closed the archbishopric at the end of the eighteenth century.

Patriarchate) in Tŭrnovo during the reign of the first five tsars of the Asenid dynasty.

From the time of Emperor Basil II's reign (976–1025) on, Ohrid's chief prelate – formally referred to as the head of the “Church of all Bulgaria” – was appointed by the emperor and ordained by the ecclesiastical council of the archbishopric. A capable general, Basil II was a shrewd statesman as well, who was fully aware that it was much easier to conquer a people than it was to keep them under the conqueror's power or to integrate them into the Byzantine state. This is why, following his triumph over the Bulgarians, between 1019 and 1020, he issued three decrees that introduced only minor changes in the organization of the Bulgarian Church. Ohrid, the residence of the last Bulgarian patriarch prior to Bulgaria's fall, remained the official see. Most Bulgarian dioceses, except those in Thrace, remained under its control, and the chief prelate's autonomy was guaranteed by the emperor.¹¹ Only several decades later the archbishopric's territorial scope was reduced as some of its ethnically Bulgarian dioceses from the eastern part of the former Bulgarian kingdom passed under the jurisdiction of the patriarch in Constantinople.¹² The archbishopric remained the chief national representative of a large, mostly Bulgarian, population, and throughout the centuries of Byzantine rule its prelates upheld its autonomy. In the thirteenth century, during Archbishop Chomatenos's incumbency, this led to the paradox of the archbishop having to protect his church's territory and canonical autonomy from the claims of the restored Bulgarian tsardom.

The main concern of the incumbents, however, was to keep separate from Constantinople and to resist the latter's attempts to limit their hard-won autonomy and interfere in the internal affairs of the “all-Bulgarian” Church.¹³

¹¹ This is evidenced by the recognition of the archbishopric's autocephaly (a status similar to that of the Cyprus archbishopric) in Archimandrite Neilos Doxopatres' 1143 report about the patriarchal seats and their respective bishoprics. See Й. Иванов. *Български старини из Македония*. София 1970, 562–64; more details can be found in Снегаров, *op. cit.*, 85–7. Basil II's sigillions (with Bulgarian translations) can be seen in Иванов, *op. cit.*, 547–62.

¹² Божилов, Гюзелев, *op. cit.*, 367–69.

¹³ Consider the sharp, sarcastic, and sometime ironic comments made by Archbishop

Eventually, the ability to protect the archbishopric's autonomy and that of its parishioners became a criterion by which an archbishop's qualities were judged. For instance, in the 1220s, Demetrios Chomatenos criticized harshly those of his predecessors, "dependants of the Constantinopolitan Church," who had been unable to shed their obedience to the patriarchs even after having been ordained as archbishops of Ohrid. "By denigrating themselves, they undermined the high status that the Bulgarian Church held in relation to the Constantinopolitan Church and reduced it [the Bulgarian Church] to one that could be easily dismissed," he thundered in a writing.¹⁴

Were these charges against the "unworthy" bishops historically justified, or were they only rhetorical flourish? In other words, do these charges provide new evidence about the history of the Bulgarian Church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries? There is no easy answer to this question. Yet reviewing the available information about Chomatenos' predecessors could shed some light on his accusations against them. Chomatenos' relationship with the Byzantine Patriarchy of Nicaea suggests that he considered "unworthy" those prelates who espoused the interests of the patriarchs rather than upholding the long-standing autocephaly of the archbishopric. They had been acting so contemptibly because they had been "dependants of the Constantinopolitan Church."

The extant sources, especially Du Cange's list of Bulgarian archbishops of Ohrid, contain the names of several prelates who could be considered Constantinople's dependants:

- *Leo Paphlagon* (1037?–1056?): the first Byzantine leader of the

Demetrios Chomatenos and his friend, the Kerkyra bishop George Vardan, in response to Patriarch Germanos II's (1222–1240) attempts to interfere with the Church and secular affairs of Epiros. Another eminent prelate from Epiros, the Naupaktos bishop John Apokaukos, wrote a long epistle opposing the claims of the former Patriarch of Nicaea, Manuel I Sarantenos (1217–1222). Sarantenos claimed that he was a Constantinopolitan patriarch in exile and, therefore, an ecumenical patriarch (Снегаров, *op. cit.*, 100–27.) Likewise, the Ohrid prelate Archbishop Theophylaktos (1089–1126?), protested (though not before the Patriarch) against the patriarch of Constantinople, Nicholas III Grammatikos's (1084–1111) attempts to grant *stauropegion* to newly built monasteries in the territory of the Ohrid Archbishopric (for instance, to a monastery by Kichevo). See *Гръцки извори за българската история* [= *Fontes Graeci Historiae Bulgariae*, hereafter ГИБИ], София 1994, IX,2, letter no. 82, 178–81.

¹⁴ See *Ponemata diaphora*, 377₂₁₈₋₂₃.

Bulgarian Church after Bulgaria's fall under Byzantine rule. Prior to serving in Ohrid, Leo had served as *chartophylax* at the patriarchate of Constantinople and together with Patriarch Michael I Keroularios (1043–1058), played an active part in the events which led to the Great Schism of 1054.

- *John of Lampi* (1064?–1078), former monk from Mount Olympos in Asia Minor and close friend of the future Patriarch John Xyphilinos (1064–1075).
- *Theophylaktos of Euripus* (1089?–1126?), former deacon and *rhetor* of the Patriarchal Church of St Sophia.
- *Leo Mungos* (who served after Theophylaktos but before 1143, when John Comnenos took office), former *evangeliar* at the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate.
- *Michael* (or Maxim) (who served after Leo Mungos and before John Comnenos), prior to becoming archbishop of Ohrid, had served as *ostiaros* and deacon at the Patriarchal chancellery.

All other archbishops of the eleventh and twelfth centuries (i.e., all who had served before Chomatenos' ascendancy in 1216) are exempt from suspicion. However, one should not forget that we know little about some of them and even less about their relationships with Constantinople. For instance, there is little information about Constantine I, whom Emperor Manuel I Comnenos (1143–1180) appointed as archbishop before 1160. The list of Bulgarian prelates of that period contains significant gaps. Nonetheless, it can be argued that one of the five names above should be taken out of Chomatenos's list of prelates "unworthy" of the archbishops' prestige: Theophylaktos of Euripus, better known as Theophylaktos of Bulgaria or Theophylaktos of Ohrid. Chomatenos spoke very highly of him on several occasions. Additionally, other sources reveal Theophylaktos' firm resistance to Patriarch Nicholas III Grammatikos' attempts to infringe upon the archbishopric's autonomy.¹⁵

¹⁵ Черепов, *op. cit.*, 198. In letter no. 82 to Deacon Michael of the Patriarchal Church, Theophylaktos protested against Nicholas III Grammatikos's violation of the Bulgarian Church's autocephaly. See ГИБИ, София 1994, IX,2: 178-80.

The other four names of archbishops, however, fulfill the criteria as dependents to Constantinople, and it is possible that these people sometime crossed the line between loyalty and servility in their relationships with the patriarchs of Constantinople. Indeed, two of them were close friends and disciples of the incumbent patriarchs. Yet the total time of service of the offices of all four “suspects” amounts to no more than fifty years; hence, their actions cannot be considered representative of the archbishopric’s relationship with the patriarchs during the archbishoprics’ first two centuries. The hypothesis that such servility could have been the norm appears even less probable if we consider the distinctly independent governance of prelates such as the aforementioned Teophylaktos of Bulgaria, who was one of the most accomplished and respected Byzantine theologians of his time. John Comnenos (before 1143 – after 1157), nephew of Emperor Alexios I Comnenos (1081–1118), was another remarkable prelate. As *sebastos* and *doux* of Dyrrachion and “co-judge of the patriarch at two church councils in Byzantium,” John Comnenos was highly placed in both the secular and the church hierarchies. Likewise, Demetrios Chomatenos’ predecessor, John Kamateros (after 1183 – ca. 1215), was a high-ranking official at Emperor Andronikos I Comnenos’s court (1181–1183). Kamateros supported the emperor in his dynastic struggles. This group must also include the anonymous Bulgarian prelate who presided over the archbishopric prior to John Kamateros. During a visit to the Byzantine capital, Kamateros’s predecessor displayed remarkable self-confidence in opposing Patriarch Theodosios Voradiotes over the legitimacy of Emperor Alexios II Comnenos’ (1180–1183) marriage.

The brief overview of Ohrid’s archbishops in the eleventh and twelfth centuries leads to another question: what was the attitude of these Byzantines towards the Bulgarian population they served? After all, they presided over the Bulgarian Church, and later over one of the two Bulgarian Churches (the second being the archbishopric of the cathedral city and capital, Tŭrnovo). Did the Byzantine archbishops really treat the Bulgarians with the hatred and contempt that numerous historians of medieval Bulgaria have attributed to them? First proposed by Vasil Zlatarski, this theory was widely accepted in Bulgarian historical scholarship in the 1920s and 1930s, when the psychological and political climate made it appear credible. The position is actually based on the role that the archbishops played at the turn of the twelfth century, when they forced their Bulgarian flock to conform to Byzantine religious authority. Even today in the same vein, scholars emphasize the unflattering remarks about the

Bulgarians made in Archbishop Theophylaktos' works. However, this theory has been challenged by such accomplished scholars as Ivan Snegarov and Dimitri Obolensky. According to Snegarov, the Byzantine prelates must have been very motivated to respect the Bulgarian national sensibilities so that the Bulgarians would support the prelates' claims for the administrative autonomy of the "Church of all Bulgaria" over which they presided. Recently, Obolensky and Margaret Mullet have carefully considered this question in their studies of Theophylaktos of Ohrid. Both scholars have further developed Snegarov's thesis with evidence that contradicts the argument that the Byzantine clerics serving in Bulgaria must have insisted upon the assimilation of the Bulgarians in the Byzantine religious institutions.¹⁶

Indeed, careful analysis of Theophylaktos' work and other sources from the period shows no specific evidence confirming the argument that the highest-ranking clerics in the Bulgarian land, who were in fact Byzantine clerics, forbade the use of Bulgarian in religious service or in education. The Greek-language vitae and sermons dedicated to eminent Bulgarian clerics did not displace the Bulgarian-language vitae and sermons. The Byzantine prelates did not destroy the works of the first Bulgarian literati but studied and cited them in their own writings. Both Theophylaktos of Ohrid and Demetrios Chomatenos – the most influential Byzantine archbishops of Ohrid – cited the works of St. Clement of Ohrid.¹⁷ Numerous other important Bulgarian literary works and transcripts of religious books also date to this period: the Bitolya Triodion, the Sinai Missal, the Evangeliary of Assemani, the Evangeliary of Sava, and the Evangeliary of Dobromir, to name a few.¹⁸ The hagiographic works of that period also include the so-called *Folk Vita of John of Rila* and the vitae of Joakim of Osogovo, Gavril of Lesnovo, and Prohor of Pchinya.

¹⁶ D. Obolensky. *Six Byzantine Portraits*. Oxford 1988, 34–82; M. Mullett. *Theophylact of Ohrid: Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop*. Aldershot 1997, 266–74. See also the recent scholarly works Obolensky and Mullett cite in support of their view.

¹⁷ Ivan Bozhilov has written in detail about the place of Bulgarian saints in Byzantine hagiography. See Chapter 4 of И. Божилков. *Българите във Византийската империя*. София 1995, 131–48.

¹⁸ П. Диневков. „Българската литература през XI–XII в.“ In: *История на българската литература*. София, Издателство на БАН, 1962, 1: 242–53; D. Angelov. *История на България*. София, Издателство на БАН, 1982, 3: 92–105; А. Милтенова. „Българската литература през XI–XII в.“ In: *История на българската средновековна литература*. София 2008, 397–433.

Another important genre was the highly popular apocryphal literature, written in the spirit of strong patriotism. Examples include the *Legend of Thessaloniki*, the *Story of Prophet Isaiah*, and the *Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle*. The extant sources also include transcripts of Byzantine works in Bulgarian translation intended for inquiring Bulgarians, which included the *Vision of Daniel*, the *Interpretation of Daniel*, and the *Story of Stephanites and Ichnilates*.

After Bulgaria fell under Byzantine rule, Bulgaria's major scholarly centers, Ohrid and Preslav, lost their influence but retained some of their functions. The school of Ohrid preserved the works of St. Clement, which served as models for future generations of Bulgarian intellectuals. Theophylaktos wrote that all these works were available during his lifetime, "having been preserved by hard-working men."¹⁹ A century later, in chapter eight of his prologue of the *Vita of St. Clement*, Chomatenos stated that "he [Clement] left these documents and holy books in Ohrid: the work of his own noble thought and hand, which the entire people honors and respects as highly as the stone tablets that God gave to Moses."²⁰ These are just a few of the better-known, strong arguments against the assertion that the Byzantine prelates of the archbishopric tried to destroy medieval Bulgarian literary works.

Additional facts also help counter and correct the still-popular argument that Byzantine rule subjected the conquered Bulgarians to cultural oppression. The decline of Bulgarian high culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries is incontestable. It is more of a product, however, of the loss of Bulgarian political independence and the related destruction of important national institutions rather than of officially formulated and actively applied assimilative policies on the part of the Byzantine secular and religious authorities. This raises the question of the objective that eminent Byzantine clerics and men of letters pursued when relating the stories of famous men and events in Bulgaria's history. Among these are popular works such as Theophylaktos' *Vita of St. Clement of Ohrid* and his story of the *Fifteen Martyrs of Tiberiopolis*, sermons about St. Clement of Ohrid, Demetrios Chomatenos' *Short Vita of*

¹⁹ „Пространно житие на св. Климент Охридски“. *ГИБИ*, София 1994, IX,2: xxii, 65, 34–5. For a discussion of Kliment of Ohrid's literary legacy, see К. Станчев, Г. Попов. *Климент Охридски. Живот и творчество*. София 1988.

²⁰ А. Милев. *Гръзките жития на Климент Охридски*. София 1966, 179.

Clement of Ohrid, and the Greek-language *Vita of St. John of Rila* by the Byzantine governor of Serdica, George Skylitzes.

Some scholars believe that these works were written with the purpose of replacing the medieval Bulgarian sources from which they drew and thus force the Bulgarians to assimilate into Byzantine culture and the Greek language. But the opposite is also possible. These works suggest that the Byzantine clerical and secular officials tried to understand the Bulgarian cultural legacy in order to become true cultural leaders of the Bulgarian people. They could not have accomplished this by being oppressive, intolerant, and disrespectful of Bulgarian history. The literary works mentioned above incontrovertibly proved their authors' efforts to partake in their parishioners' culture and attitudes despite some cases in which specific facts of Bulgarian history were deliberately belittled or even not acknowledged at all. On one occasion Theophylaktos of Ohrid went so far as to identify himself as St. Clement's fellow countryman. Describing the educational and literary accomplishments of his famous predecessor, Theophylaktos, the Byzantine Greek wrote, "Clement told us, the Bulgarians, everything we need to know about the Church."²¹

Additionally, the Byzantine clerics, and especially Archbishop Theophylaktos, made considerable efforts to curb the abuses of the imperial tax officials and to limit the Constantinopolitan patriarchs' interference in the affairs of the Bulgarian Church. Some recent studies discuss in great detail Theophylaktos' alleged hostility towards his Bulgarian parishioners, expressed in various offensive judgments in some of his writings. These scholars argue persuasively that the archbishop's complaints about the unbearable living conditions among the Bulgarians were to a large degree a literary convention among those intellectuals who, at that time, were sent on secular or religious missions to provinces far from Constantinople, rather than a reflection of the

²¹ „Пространно житие на св. Климент Охридски“. ГИБИ, София 1994, IX,2: xxii, 66, 34–5. According to some historians, Theophylaktos' famous statement is a remnant of a medieval Bulgarian vita of Kliment that has not been preserved and that Theophylaktos used in writing the detailed biography of Ohrid's thaumaturge. Even if this hypothesis could be confirmed, we would still have to explain why Theophylaktos, who was known as a fine rhetorician, used another writer's text in such an unsophisticated manner. For an overview of the scholarly views on this issue, see Милев, *op. cit.*, 37–71, and D. Obolensky. "Theophylact of Ochrid and the Authorship of the Vita Clementis." In: *Byzantion. A Tribute to Andreas N. Stratos*. Athens 1986, II: 611–2.

living conditions in Ohrid and Bulgaria.²²

The extant sources not only fail to provide evidence of any deliberate hostility of the Byzantine prelates toward their Bulgarian parishioners, but also contain a few examples of the archbishops' concern for the Bulgarians in hard times. We have considerable evidence that Theophylaktos' archbishopric (1089–1126?) defended before the imperial authorities the economic, legal, and what we nowadays refer to as the human rights of his parishioners, most of them Bulgarian.²³

Between the beginning of the eleventh and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries, the archbishopric of Ohrid reached its apogee. Founded with the purpose of replacing the Bulgarian patriarchate after the end of the First Bulgarian Empire, by the beginning of the thirteenth century, the archbishopric had to work alongside the reinstated Bulgarian Church, which was first restored as an archbishopric and later converted into the Patriarchate of Tŭrnovo, the capital of the Second Bulgarian Empire.

For the largest part of its first two centuries, however, the archbishopric served most of the Bulgarian population of the Byzantine Empire;²⁴ hence, it was first and foremost the Bulgarians' Church. This is why the high-ranking Byzantine clerics must have had only limited influence over their Bulgarian parishioners (regardless of any specific tasks that the emperors or the Constantinopolitan patriarchs may have wanted them to carry out and regardless of whether they had the social legitimacy necessary to accomplish such tasks). Their potential influence must have been further limited by having to adapt to specific Bulgarian cultural practices and even partake in them as much as possible.

²² Mullett, *op. cit.*, 279ff.

²³ See examples of such defense in *ГИБИ*, София 1994, IX, 2: letters 22, 24, 45 and 46, 102–5, 126–8, 194–9. The question of the tax burden that Bulgarians had to bear during this period has been discussed in detail in Г. Литаврин. *Византия и България (XI–XII в.)*. София 1987, 228–52.

²⁴ The other Bulgarians in the Byzantine Empire were served by the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate.

It is likely that the Byzantine clerics and their Bulgarian parishioners were not particularly fond of each other. Yet in times of hardship, the archbishops supported their charges, while the Bulgarians sided with the Empire during the many raids it endured from nomadic pagans, Latin pilgrims and knights, or other armed adventurers from the West. In times of peace, tax collection could be a heavy burden that required the joint efforts of the clerics and the population they served and was another field of cooperation between pastors and flock.

By protecting the autonomy of the Bulgarian Church from the Constantinopolitan patriarchs, the archbishops of Ohrid also indirectly managed to obtain a relative autonomy for the Bulgarians in the Byzantine Empire. Additionally, on all major holidays, clerics and parishioners would put aside their differences and sing their Bulgarian or Greek hymns in praise of the Lord and his saints. The work of the Bulgarians' first teachers, St. Cyril and St. Methodius, was always honored, as was the memory of Ohrid's titular saint, Clement, as well as his brother in Christ, Naum, and the saintly Prince Boris, who had converted the Bulgarians to Christianity. Their immanent presence gave hope and encouragement not only to the ordinary Bulgarians but also to the high-ranking archbishops of Ohrid.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE ATHONITE SLAVS IN THE MIDDLE AGES?

Cyril Pavlikianov

This paper will provide a statistical summary of documentary evidence of Slavic presence in the present-day Greek monasteries on Mount Athos between the tenth and the sixteenth centuries. In processing Slavic signatures to Athonite documents from the period 1169–1661, some 230 cases were found where the Slavic language was given preference as a medium of expression equal to the Greek language. The study also documented the catalogues of Slavic manuscripts housed in the main library centers in Russia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Macedonia, Croatia, Paris, Vienna, the Vatican, Jerusalem, Sinai, and the manuscript collections of the Athonite monasteries of Hilandar, Zografou, the Great Lavra, St. Panteleemon, Iveron, and Vatopedi. Over 200 marginal notes were collected, explicitly indicating the names of Slavs engaged in literary pursuits on Mount Athos. What conclusions can be drawn from the amassed evidence?

The earliest Slav Athonites. In 982, the signature of “Παύλου τοῦ Στογόρετζι” appeared in a document of the Iveron monastery. According to Igor Shevchenko, whose opinion was accepted by Peter Schreiner, this was apparently a reference to the Slavic term *свѣтоμοшорецъ* (Hagiorite), which was transliterated in Greek with the abbreviated form *c(ε)mo*. The Athonite Paul signed the 982 a document in his capacity of citizen of Hierissos, but his sobriquet leaves no doubt that he was an Athonite monk. Taking into account the source evidence and the extensive bibliography attesting to the presence of Bulgarian settlements in Chalkidike and Hierissos in particular, we should assume that Paul was of Bulgarian descent.¹

The Alipiou Monastery. The extinct Alipiou monastery was an autonomous monastic foundation from 1048 until 1428, when it was taken over by the adjacent Koutloumousiou monastery. The single Slavic-speaking

¹Κ. Παυλικιάνωφ. *Σλάβοι μοναχοί στο Άγιον Όρος από τον Ι΄ ως τον ΙΖ΄ αιώνα*. Θεσσαλονίκη 2002, 1–2.

hegoumenos of the monastery appeared in 1422 under the name Euthymios, but unfortunately his ethnic origin remains unclear.²

The Vatopedi Monastery. Between 1366 and 1600, the second most important Athonite monastery recorded nine Slavic-speaking monks, five of whom were Serbs: Stefan Nemanja and his son Rastko, or St. Sava of Serbia (1193–1198), Theodosios (1366), Theophanes (in the end of the fourteenth or the beginning of the fifteenth century), and Anthony (at the mid-fifteenth century). A manuscript copyist called Mitrophanes appeared in 1424; his name is mentioned in a marginal note in a Slavic manuscript currently preserved at the State Historical Museum in Moscow. The manuscript contains works by St. John Klimax and the copying began in 1422 in Constantinople, in the church of the capital's Russian colony devoted to the Holy Mother of God Peribleptos. The copy was completed on 15 March 1424 at the Vatopedi Monastery by the elder Mitrophanes who copied the text from fol. 65 through fol. 329 according to a previous arrangement with the Russian monk Eusebios – Ephraim, to whom we owe the transfer of the unfinished manuscript to Mount Athos. The orthographic revision and the descent of Mitrophanes cannot be determined because the marginal note is extant only in late Russian copies. In 1596, the Slavs Sabbas and Ezekiel lived at Vatopedi, but their linguistic identity remains unclear. Around 1600, one of the residents at the monastery was a Slavic-speaking monk by the name of Dionysios, whose language exhibits a number of Bulgarian peculiarities. The initial predominance of Serbs at the monastery appears to have lasted until the middle of the fifteenth century, whereas during the sixteenth century, Bulgarians, too, gradually began to gain access to the monastery. Whatever the case may be, the Slavic presence at Vatopedi has always been marginal and was probably a direct function of the political and demographic situation in the lands that could ensure access to Mount Athos.³

² P. Lemerle, ed. *Archives de l'Athos II. Actes de Kutlumus*. Paris 1988; К. Павликианов. „Славянското присъствие в светогорските обители Алипиев манастир и Ватопед през късното средновековие“. *Светогорска обител Зограф*, 3 (1999), 179–85; Παυλικιάνωφ, *op. cit.*, 3–5.

³ М. Ласкарисъ. „Ватопедската грамота на царь Иванъ Асѣня II“. *Български старини*, 11 (1930), 29–35; М. Laskaris. „Actes serbes de Vatopédi.“ *Byzantinoslavica*, 6 (1935–1936), 183–4; L. Mavrommatis. „Une acte slave de Vatopédi.“ *Хиландарски Зборник*, 4 (1978), 137–40; С. Pavlikianov. „A Short Catalogue of the Slavic Manuscripts in Vatopedi.“ *Σύμμεκτα*, 10 (1996), 295–325; Павликианов. „Славянското присъствие в светогор-

The Great Lavra. The crown jewel of the Athonite hierarchy, the Lavra of St. Athanasios the Athonite, was founded in 963 with generous donations from Emperor Nikephoros II Phokas. Slavs made their way into the Lavra around the middle of the fourteenth century and by the beginning of the seventeenth century documentary evidence numbered fifteen Slavic-speaking cenobites altogether. Seven can positively be identified to have been Bulgarians; there were three Russians and four Serbs. The ethnicity of the last member of the group remains unidentified. There were three successive periods of Bulgarian, Russian, and Serbian dominance at the monastery, each governed by different internal reasons. The Bulgarian translators Zakchaios the Philosopher (also known as Zagorenin) and Johannes were the first Slavs to broach the literary wealth of the monastic library; their work at the middle of the fourteenth century most likely had some connection to the nameless Serbian man of letters who, in 1348, made at the Lavra a copy of the Four Gospels intended for Stefan Dušan. In the 1350s, the Ecumenical Patriarch Kallistos ordered the expulsion of Gennadios, a heretic of Bulgarian descent who was forced to leave the great monastery, while a decade later, the Lavra became the home of two more Bulgarians, Gabriel and St. Romylos of Vidin. Russian literary presence at the monastery was documented in 1430–1432 with the copies and translations of the cenobites Andronikos, Abraamios, and Athanasios, who worked not at the Lavra itself, but at its dependency, the skete of the Prophet Elijah in the vicinity of the Philotheou monastery. Serb penetration at the Lavra was not witnessed until the end of the fifteenth century. It ran unevenly through the sixteenth century and died out at the beginning of the seventeenth century without connection to literary or translation activities.⁴

ските обители Алипиев манастир и Ватопед“, 179–85; К. Павликианов. „Неизвестен славяно-гръцки документ от архива на атонската обител Ватопед“. *Palaeobulgarica*, 27:1 (2003), 75–84; Παυλικιάνωφ, Σλάβοι μοναχοί, 6–11; Р. Радић. „Манастир Ватопед и Србија у XV веку“. In: *Трећа казивања о Светој Гори*. Белград 1999, 84–99. Cf. also J. Bompaire, J. Lefort, V. Kravari and C. Giros, eds. *Archives de l’Athos XXI. Actes de Vatopédi I. Des origines à 1329*. Paris 2001; J. Lefort, V. Kravari, C. Giros and K. Smyrlis, eds. *Archives de l’Athos XXII. Actes de Vatopédi II. De 1330 à 1376*. Paris 2006; C. Pavlikianov. *The Athonite Monastery of Vatopedi from 1480 to 1600 – The Philological Evidence of Twenty-eight Unknown Post-Byzantine Documents from its Archive*. Sofia 2006; idem. *The Athonite Monastery of Vatopedi from 1462 to 1707. The Archive Evidence*. Sofia 2008.

⁴ Д. Анастасијевић. „Српски архив Лавре Атонске“. *Споменик Српске краљевске академије*, 56 (II/48) (1922), 6–21; P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, N. Svoronos et D. Papachrysanthou, eds., avec la collaboration de S. Ćirković. *Archives de l’Athos V, VIII, X et IX. Actes de*

The Berrhoiotou Monastery. Documentation suggests that this monastery existed from 996 until 1316. Some scholars have argued that there were two monasteries with the name Berrhoiotou, one of which was in direct proximity to the original Russian monastery of Xylourgou. This claim is supported by the Slavic signature of Simeon, cenobite at the Berrhoiotou monastery, who called himself a *cleric of the Russians*. The signature has been dated circa 1316 and was inscribed in Greek, but with Cyrillic letters. The notice that Simeon acted as a *cleric of the Russians* and the fact that he had mastered the Cyrillic alphabet suggest he was probably of Russian descent.⁵

The Gregoriou Monastery. Most likely founded around 1420, this monastery began to appear in the sources no earlier than 1430. Of particular interest is the fact that Slavs appeared there only several decades after its establishment. It is quite possible that Slavic-speaking cenobites were involved in its creation, since, by the end of the fifteenth century, their literary work was already a prominent feature of the monastery. Between 1483 and 1553 there were twelve monks of Slavic descent at the Gregoriou monastery; five of them used a Bulgarian dialect, four applied grammatical rules according to the Serb manner, and three were of obscure linguistic identity. The Slavic presence grew particularly intense between 1496 and 1526, when the monastery became a copying center of Slavic manuscripts intended primarily for in-house use. Since no donations from Serbian or Wallachian rulers were attested during that particular period, a fair assumption would be that the Slavs had come to Gregoriou as a result of their gradual penetration along the west coast of the Athonite Peninsula, which started as early as the end of the fifteenth century.⁶

The Monastery of Zelianos. Undiscovered until recently, the Monastery of Zelianos (“ἡ μονὴ τοῦ Ζελιάνου”) became an active monastic foundation

Lavra I–IV. Paris 1970, 1977, 1979, 1982; Κ. Παυλικιάνωφ. “Ἡ παρουσία Σλάβων μοναχῶν στὴ Μεγίστη Λαύρα κατὰ τὸ ΙΔ’ καὶ τὸ ΙΕ’ αἰῶνα.” Ὁ Ἄθως στοὺς 14ο-16ο αἰῶνες (= Ἄθωνικὰ Σύμμεικτα), 4 (1997), 75–87; Παυλικιάνωφ, Σλάβοι μοναχοί, 73–85; C. Pavlikianov. “Saint Romylos of Vidin and His Activity as the Spiritual Instructor of an Unknown Slavic Monastic Settlement on Mount Athos.” *Годишник на Софийския университет “Св. Климент Охридски” (Център за славяно-византийски проучвания „Проф. Иван Дуичев“)*, 91:10 (2001), 147–54; idem. “The Athonite Period in the Life of Saint Romylos of Vidin.” *Σύμμεικτα*, 15 (2002), 247–55.

⁵ Παυλικιάνωφ, *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 12–3.

⁶ Παυλικιάνωφ, *ibid.*, 14–22.

only during the eleventh century. It was situated on the mountain slope above the Xenophontos monastery. The Greek transliteration of its name apparently corresponds to the Slavic name Zhelian. The monastery was doubtlessly named after its founder, who must have been of Slavic origin. Most likely, however, he had no ties with the Bulgarian lands proper, but hailed from the Slavic-speaking settlements in the vicinity of the Athonite Peninsula. Of note is that the Zelianos monastery was founded by a Slav, whereas the other Slavic monasteries on Mount Athos originally emerged as Greek monastic centers that passed into Slavic hands at a much later period. That Zhelian was surrounded exclusively by Greek monks seems highly unlikely. One possible assumption would be that he led a small cenobitic community whose members were for the most part Slavs; we must note, however, that no evidence has survived to corroborate this hypothesis. Zhelian was by no means an illustrious person, and this seems to support the view that he hailed from the Slavic settlements in Chalkidike. In light of extensive evidence elucidating the presence of Bulgarians in proximity of Mount Athos, the assumption that Zhelian was of Bulgarian descent would not seem unfounded. The creation of the Zelianos monastery in the first half of the 11th century indicates that the Bulgarian-speaking population of the Byzantine Empire was involved in the life of the Athonite monastic community already in the first century of its organized existence.⁷

The Iveron Monastery. Founded in the 980s, the Georgian monastery of Iveron is one of the earliest monastic houses on Mount Athos. An analysis of Greek Athonite documents found that Iveron's hegoumenos around 1320 was probably a Serb called Jovan. The Serb penetration at the monastery, however, was short-lived and apparently remained unnoticed, because during the years between 1345 and 1371, when it is well documented that Serbs dominated Mount Athos, the Serb administration made no encroachments upon the Iveron hegoumenate.⁸

⁷ К. Павликьянов. „Манастирът на Желян – първото славянско монашеско учреждение на Атон“. *Светогорска обител Зограф*, 2 (1996), 17–22; С. Pavlikianov. “The Monastery of Zelianos – the First Slavic Monastic Institution on Athos.” *Σύμμεικτα*, 11 (1997), 37–48; К. Παυλικιάνωφ. “Η ένταξη των Βουλγάρων στην μοναστηριακή κοινότητα του Αγίου Όρους – οι περιπτώσεις των μονών Ζωγράφου και Ζελιάνου.” *Göttinger Beiträge zur byzantinischen und neugriechischen Philologie*, 2 (2002), 61–8; idem, *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 23–31.

⁸ J. Lefort, N. Oikonomidès, D. Papachrysanthou and V. Kravari, eds., with the collaboration

The Kakiplaka community. This was a monastic hermitage subordinate to the Great Lavra. According to a Russian text from the end of the sixteenth century, it was situated in a place called *Evil Rock*, or Κακή Πλάκα, high on the mountain slope above the monastery of St Paul. A marginal note informs us that, during the middle of the fourteenth century, the place was inhabited by a group of four Slavic anchorites dedicated to literary studies. The spiritual instructor of that community was St. Romylos of Vidin who, until 1371 was active at the Great Lavra. The Bulgarian origins of St. Romylos provide grounds to assume that the inhabitants of the Kakiplaka *kellion* by the names of Dionysios, Theoktistos, Simon and Thomas, were also of Bulgarian descent.⁹

The Kaproules Monastery. Until recently, the monastery of Kaproules, situated in the Athonite capital of Karyai, was believed to have emerged at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Our research at the Vatopedi archive conducted in 1995 found that a hegoumenos of the Kaproules monastery by the name of Konon had signed a Vatopedian document by the middle of the eleventh century. Only two Slavs, Gabriel and Gerasimos, ever lived at the monastery, and they were there in the early sixteenth century. For the entire period between 1071 and 1538, the Greeks outnumbered the Slavs at Kaproules five to two; total Slavic dominance between 1500 and 1538 clearly showed Serb linguistic undertones. Furthermore, the Serb Gabriel from the Kaproules monastery was a very popular figure on Mount Athos and was elected five times to serve as a *protos* of the Athonite community. Gabriel's literary collaboration with Hilandar is considered as an established fact.¹⁰

The Karakalou Monastery. This major Athonite monastery was founded at the beginning of the eleventh century. In 1489, the Hilandar hegoumenos Isaiah referred to it as the *Arnaut monastery*. The Slavs were present in the Karakalou only at the beginning of the sixteenth century, as evidenced by the Bulgarian typology of the signatures of two hegoumenoi, Stefanos (1503) and Maximos (1504–1505). By the middle of the same century, the Karakalou monk Euthymios received as a donation a manuscript written according to Bulgarian medieval orthography. This event implies that he was probably

of Hélène Métrévél. *Archives de l'Athos XIV, XVI, XVIII et XIX. Actes d'Iviron I–IV*. Paris 1985, 1990, 1994, 1995; Παυλικιάνωφ, *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 38–9.

⁹ Pavlikianov. "Saint Romylos of Vidin," 147–54; idem., "The Athonite Period," 247–55; Παυλικιάνωφ, *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 40–1.

¹⁰ Παυλικιάνωφ, *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 42–5.

Bulgarian. These brief traces of Bulgarian presence at the Karakalou were clearly related to the influx of Slav-speaking monks in almost all of the Athonite monasteries in the first two decades of the sixteenth century.¹¹

The Kastamonitou Monastery. This monastic community was founded in the eleventh century and never claimed a prominent place in the Athonite hierarchy. From the middle of the fourteenth century until the end of the fifteenth century, fourteen Slavs are recorded as having lived there. The earliest among them were two Serb copyists who were active during the 1360s. In 1424, Kastamonitou burned down to ashes and its hegoumenos Neophyte, a Slav whose presence at the monastery has been documented since 1423, approached the Serb dignitary Radić, who was a *čelnik* (military commander) of the Despot Stephen Lazarević, with a plea to renovate the monastery. The following years saw a much stronger Serb presence in Kastamonitou. Until the end of the fifteenth century, eight Kastamonitou monks signed their names in Slavic, and three of them used a Serb dialect. Nothing can be said with certainty about the others. Considering *čelnik* Radić's generous donations to the monastery, however, and the fact that at the end of his life he retreated as a monk in Kastamonitou, we may assume that all five Slavs of uncertain identity were Serbs from Novo Brdo, where Radić owned silver mines. The Serbian influence in Kastamonitou at the end of the fifteenth century gradually weakened and during the first decades of the sixteenth century, there were three local monks who are documented whose language leaned towards the non-inflectional idiom of Bulgarian. We may, therefore, maintain that with the downfall of the last independent regions of the Serbian state around 1460, the Serb monks in Kastamonitou lost much of their income. As a consequence, their numbers quickly dwindled and they were supplanted in the beginning of the following century by monks of Bulgarian descent.¹²

The Xenophontos Monastery. Established circa 998 as a monastic community dedicated to St. George, the monastery took the name of its

¹¹Κ. Χρυσσοχοΐδης, Π. Γουναρίδης. "Τερά Μονή Καρακάλλου. Κατάλογος τοῦ ἀρχείου." *Ἀθωνικά Σύμμεικτα*, 1 (1985), passim; C. Pavlikianov. "The Athonite Monastery of Karakallou – Slavic Presence and Slavic Manuscripts." *Palaeobulgarica*, 25:1 (2001), 21–45; Παυλικιάνωφ. *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 46–8.

¹²Ν. Οἰκονομίδης. "Τερά Μονή Κωνσταμονίτου. Κατάλογος τοῦ ἀρχείου (1047–1686)." *Σύμμεικτα*, 2 (1970), passim; idem, ed. *Archives de l'Athos IX. Actes de Kastamonitou*. Paris 1978; Παυλικιάνωφ. *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 49–57.

founder Xenophon only after 1035. The first Slavic presence there dates back to around 1402, and by 1661, the number of documented Slavs had reached twenty-three people. Five of them used a tongue that may be defined as Serbian; nine may have been Bulgarian-speaking. The available linguistic evidence does not permit any positive conclusions with regard to the other nine monks. The spread of Serb and Bulgarian presence across the centuries is quite uneven. The prevalence of Serbs was most common at the end of the fifteenth century, in the first years of the sixteenth century, and in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, whereas the Bulgarians predominated throughout the sixteenth century and partly during the seventeenth century. In 1536, literary ties were documented between Xenophontos and the Rila Monastery, offering eloquent proof of the Bulgarian prevalence at the monastery during the sixteenth century. The representation of the Wallachian *župan*, Preda Buzescu, as a donor in the temple of St. Demetrios indicates that the penetration of Slavs at the Xenophontos was facilitated by donations provided by the Wallachian voivodes and dignitaries to the monastery; it also suggests that several persons of Wallachian descent may have been concealed among the ranks of seemingly Slavic-speaking monks.¹³

The Xeropotamou Monastery. This early Athonite monastic house seems to be mentioned for the first time in 956, in an act of the *protospatharios* Johannes preserved in its archives. The Slavic presence there is associated with the period from 1423 until 1553. There are twelve documented cases of Slavic-speaking monks: five remain of uncertain origin and two were possibly Serbs. The other five, who used a dialect of the Bulgarian type, appeared in the first half of the sixteenth century. At the end of the fifteenth century, the Xeropotamou monastery and the Protaton in Karyai exchanged manuscripts, while during the sixteenth century, Moldavian aristocrats often donated Slavic books to the monastery. These facts suggest that the liturgy in that monastery may have been conducted in a Slavic language, too. The signatures of some Athonite documents indicate that, during the sixteenth century, the Bulgarian monks in Xeropotamou gradually edged out the Serbs.¹⁴

¹³ D. Papachrysanthou, ed. *Archives de l'Athos XV. Actes de Xénophon*. Paris 1986; C. Pavlikianov. "The Athonite Monastery of Xenophontos and its Slavic Archive. An Unknown Slavic Description of the Monastery's Land on Athos." *Palaeobulgarica*, 26:2 (2002), 102–11; Παυλικιάνωφ. *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 96–106.

¹⁴ J. Bompaire, ed. *Archives de l'Athos III. Actes de Xéropotamou*. Paris 1964; Π. Γουνναρίδης. "Αρχείο της Ιεράς Μονής Ξηροποτάμου. Επιτομές μεταβυζαντινών έγγραφων."

The Xystres Monastery. The first reference to this minor monastery was made in 1057. Its place in the Athonite documents accords it the status of a third-tier monastic center. We have no evidence of cohabitation of Greeks and Slavs in this monastery because, after 1431, all its members were exclusively Slavs. Of the monks Vikentios (1431), Gabriel (1456) and Athanasios (1500), only the latter may be described as a Bulgarian; the linguistic evidence about the former two is meager. The Slavs predominated at the monastery until the beginning of the sixteenth century, when it declined and was absorbed by Vatopedi. None of the Slavic residents has signed his name in the capacity of hegoumenos.¹⁵

The Koutloumousiou Monastery. The Koutloumousiou Monastery was not among the earliest Athonite monastic houses and was not mentioned earlier than 1169. The Slavs gained access there around 1496 and dominated the scene until 1516. During that period in Koutloumousiou there was a group of six monks, at least two of whom used some sort of Bulgarian dialect. The origin of the other four monks remains obscure. Some suspect that in view of the close ties ascertained between the Koutloumousiou and the Wallachian voivodes, these men may have been Wallachians who are known to have used the so-called “Tŭrnovo version of the Middle Bulgarian language” for their liturgical and epistolary purposes until the end of the seventeenth century. This thesis, however, should be ruled out. Some Greek Athonite documents issued by Patriarch Jeremias I reveal the views of the rest of the Athonite community about the ethnic affiliation of the Koutloumousiou brotherhood. According to these documents, Koutloumousiou was a Bulgarian monastery. The brotherhood most likely made its home there before 1494 and in 1501 the monastery was granted an official blessing by the Constantinopolitan patriarch. According to a document kept at the Vatopedi, however, in 1540, the Bulgarian monastic congregation was driven out of Koutloumousiou with a patriarchal decree for damage caused to the monastery as a result of drinking (ταῖς οἰνοφλυγίαις αὐτῶν τὴν μονὴν διέφθειραν). Not before long, the same

group of monks unsuccessfully attempted to take over the semi-abandoned Chouliaras monastery in the vicinity of the Athonite capital Karyai.¹⁶

Ἀθωνικὰ Σύμμεικτα, 3 (1993), passim; Παυλικιάνωφ, *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 107–15.

¹⁵ Παυλικιάνωφ. *ibid.*, 116–8.

¹⁶ P. Lemerle, A. Soloviev. “Trois chartes des souverains serbes conservées au monastère de

The Makrou Monastery. This monastery's existence is documented from 1108 until 1528. The last century of its history, from 1409 to 1528, was associated with the names of six Slavs and a single Greek, a proportion indicating almost total prevalence of Slavic-speaking monks during the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries. The four Slavs that appeared between 1409 and 1456 (Dometian, Theodore, Jonas, and Kallinikos) wrote in a language similar to the Serbian tongue; the other two, Paul in 1501 and Mitrophanes from 1500 until 1528, displayed distinctly Bulgarian linguistic peculiarities. Clearly, in the second half of the fifteenth century the Serbs in the monastery of Makrou gave way to monks of Bulgarian descent.¹⁷

The Makrigenes Monastery. The monastery was mentioned for the first time in 1048. Only two Slavs lived there during the fifteenth century: Moses in 1427, of uncertain linguistic affiliation, and Niphon in 1457, who in all likelihood was a Serb. We are aware of two Greeks during the same period: Joseph, from 1451 to 1462, and Dometian in 1472. This precludes the possibility that there was Slavic dominance at the monastery, but suggests the Slavic presence may have been at least equal to that of Greeks. The Serb Niphon may well have maintained ties with the neighboring monasteries of Xenophontos and St. Panteleemon (Rossikon), where the Serb presence was particularly strong in the middle of the fifteenth century.¹⁸

The Monastery of St Paul. The original monastery named after St. Paul was founded at the end of the tenth century in close connection to the Xeropotamou Monastery. In the 1360s, this foundation was renovated by the Serb dignitaries Anthony Bagaš and Gerasimos Radonja. Their donations have been scrupulously analyzed by Gojko Subotić; it appears that they have marked merely the beginning of manifest Slavic infiltration at the monastery. Between 1360 and 1673, 49 Slavs altogether came to the monastery of St. Paul; some of them settled down in the nearby monastic community of St. Anna, which belonged to the Great Lavra. As a rule, however, they never

Kutlumus (Mont Athos).” *Seminarium Kondakovianum (Annales de l’Institut Kondakov)*, 11 (1940), 130–46; Lemerle, *Archives de l’Athos II. Actes de Kutlumus*; C. Pavlikianov. “The Slavs in the monastery of Kutlumus and the postbyzantine murals of its *catholicon*.” *Проблеми на изкуството*, 4 (2000), 29–32; Παυλικιάνωφ. *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 58–72.

¹⁷ К. Павликианов. „Славянското присъствие в светогорския манастир Макру през 14-и и 15-и век“. *Светогорска обител Зограф*, 2 (1996), 109–19; Παυλικιάνωφ. *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 86–93.

¹⁸ Παυλικιάνωφ. *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 94–5.

lost contact with the Slavic-speaking hegoumenos of St. Paul's monastery. Monks of uncertain origin were most frequent: they numbered 25 people, evenly spread across the entire period from 1406 until 1673. Of this number, 11 people were self-identified as Serbs, and 13 were probably Bulgarian. The Serbs were clearly prevalent during the earlier period, from 1360 to 1595; the number of the Bulgarians increased at the end of the sixteenth century and especially in the first half of the seventeenth century, when almost all of the manuscript copyists that resided in what was to become the skete of St. Anna were either of uncertain origin or used a Bulgarian dialect of the Macedonian type. In all likelihood, at the turn of the seventeenth century the Serbs at St. Paul were gradually edged out by Bulgarians directly connected to the Macedonian lands.¹⁹

The Plakas Monastery. This was a poorly known monastic house whose significance was very limited. It was mentioned as an independent Greek monastery from 1076 to 1347, when, following instructions from King Stephen Dušan, the Hilandar monks requested that the Athonite protos Niphon handed it over. The Hilandar dominance over the Plakas, however, remained at stake for two decades. Only in 1375 did the Athonite Council of Karyai and the *protos* Gerasimos conclusively legalize the Hilandar rights over Plakas.²⁰

The Athonite Protaton. The name referred to the central church in the Athonite capital of Karyai, as well as to the Athonite administration itself. According to Dionysia Papachrysanthou, the first mention of an Athonite *protos* dates to 908. No Slavs were attested at the Protaton until 1348, but the names of 23 Athonite *protoi* of Slavic origin have survived from the period 1348–1579. Compared to the overall number of 144 *protoi* that governed Athos between 908 and 1593, this gives a rate of about 16 per cent. Another estimate, however, comparing the number of Greeks and Slavs elected to serve as *protoi* between 1348 and 1579, yields a somewhat different proportion: 28 per cent.

Among the Slav *protoi* on Mount Athos, nine were Serbs, six were Bulgarians, and the origin of the other eight eludes identification. Quite

¹⁹ Д. Синдик. „Српске повеље у светогорском манастиру Светог Павла“. *Мешовита грађа*, 6. *Грађа историјског института*, 17 (1978), 183–205; К. Χρυσοχοΐδης. “Τερά Μονῆ Ἀγίου Παύλου. Κατάλογος τοῦ ἀρχείου.” *Σύμμεικτα*, 4 (1981), passim; Παυλικιάνωφ. *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 124–39.

²⁰ Παυλικιάνωφ. *ibid.*, 140.

possibly, four members of that group were also of Serb descent, but no direct evidence is available to support this theory. The Serbs were evenly distributed during the period from 1348 to 1579, while instances of Bulgarians and Slavs of uncertain origin grew more frequent only during the sixteenth century.

Two sub-periods of Slavic prevalence at the Protaton can be identified. The first period was relatively short, spanning the third quarter of the fourteenth century, and its beginning coincided with the conquest of Southern Macedonia and Athos by Stefan Dušan. From 1348 to 1375, and sporadically until 1395, the Slavs we find in the Protaton – be they *protoi*, *dikaioi* or *ekklēsiarchai* – were invariably Serbs. Therefore, the Greek Athonite tradition defined the 1350s and 1360s as the years of Serb *dominance* in the Protaton. The establishment of Serb administration in Karyai prompted counter measures by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which tried to restore balance and authorized the bishop of Hierissos to exercise extraordinary interference in the affairs of the Protaton. All too soon, however, after Despot Jovan Uglješa suffered defeat at the Battle of Černomen in 1371, the Serbs lost ground at the Protaton.

The second period of Slavic prevalence at the Protaton was substantially longer, from 1456 to 1579, and was not the result of external pressure or the meddling of powerful Slavic-speaking rulers. During that period, the office of the *protos* was not continually in Slavic hands; Slavs were not found in the lower levels of Athonite administration and the *protoi* were not only Serbs, but Bulgarians as well. We would not be amiss to call the time from 1500 to 1579 the second Slavic *dominance* in the Protaton. This dominance provoked no resistance by the Greek monks and was a joint effort of Bulgarians and Serbs.²¹

The Simonopetra Monastery. A monastery called St Simon's was mentioned on Athos during the eleventh and the twelfth century, but it is uncertain whether this reference pertained to the later Simonopetra monastery which, according to a forged chrysobull of the Serb Despot Jovan Uglješa, was refurbished with his donations in 1363. Despite the Serb despot's dedication to that monastic community, Slavs gained access there only around 1489, at a

²¹ D. Papachrysanthou, ed. *Archives de l'Athos VII. Actes du Prôtaton*. Paris 1975; K. Χρυσοχοϊδης. "Συμπληρώσεις στον κατάλογο τῶν πρώτων τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὁρους." *Σύμμεικτα*, 8 (1989), 435–71; C. Pavlikianov. "The Slavic lingual presence in the Athonite capital of Karyai – the Slavic manuscripts of the Protaton library." *Palaeobulgarica*, 24:1 (2000), 77–111; Παυλικιάνωφ. *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 141–62.

time when the Hilandar hegoumenos Isaias called Simonopetra a Bulgarian monastery. The appearance of the Bulgarian-speaking hegoumenos Ananias at Simonopetra in 1503 supports Isaias's opinion and suggests that at the end of the fifteenth century, Simonopetra was probably the home of a Bulgarian monastic brotherhood.²²

The Sthlavandreou Monastery. The monastic community “τοῦ Σθλαβανδρέου” was mentioned in 1294. The name apparently derived from the name of its founder, Andrew, conspicuously dubbed a Slav. Unfortunately, this is all we know about this monastery.²³

The Sth(y)lyvola Monastery. In 1287, the hegoumenos “τοῦ Σθυλοβολᾶ”, Nicodemos, signed a document currently preserved at the Great Lavra. The Greek letter combinations “σθλ” or “σθυλ” were the usual way of rendering the Slavic phoneme “сл”. Without the insertion of “θ” or “θυ,” the Greek letters “σλ” read “zl”. This detail perhaps suggests that the appellation of this enigmatic monastery was of Slavic origin.²⁴

The Philotheou Monastery. The monastery was first mentioned in Athonite documents in 1013 and 1015. The first Slavic infiltration there was dated about 1427. Out of the 36 known *hegoumenoi* of Philotheou between 1013 and 1520, eight proved to be Slavs. Nine Philotheou monks were mentioned during the fifteenth century: five Greeks and four Slavs. The Greeks appeared evenly across the century, whereas the Slavs grew more frequent only at the end of the period, especially immediately before 1519. Of the eight Slavs at Philotheou, probably only one was a Serb. Three remain of unidentified origin and four used a Bulgarian dialect exhibiting Macedonian specificities, allowing us to assume that the Bulgarians at Philotheou probably hailed from the agricultural outskirts of Mount

²² Δ. Βαμβρακάς, “Ἐρεῶν Μονῆ Σίμωνος Πέτρας. Κατάλογος τοῦ ἀρχείου.” *Ἀθωνικὰ Σύμμεικτα*, 1 (1985), passim; Παυλικιάνωφ, *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 165–7; C. Pavlikianov. “The Monastery of Simonopetra and Its Athonite Domain in the First Half of the 17th Century – Four Unknown Acts from the Monastery’s Archive.” In: *Образ и слово. Εἰκόνα καὶ λόγος. Юбилеен сборник по случай 60-годишнината на професор Аксиния Джурова*. София 2004, 289–98; C. Pavlikianov. “Three Unpublished Post-Byzantine Documents from the Athonite Monastery of Simonopetra (1581–1593).” In: *Сборник в чест на 70-годишнината на академик Васил Гюзелев*. София 2006, 257–72.

²³ Παυλικιάνωφ. *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 163.

²⁴ Παυλικιάνωφ. *ibid.*, 164.

Athos.²⁵

The Chanas Monastery. This third-tier Athonite monastery was attested in sources from 1001 to 1366. The last known hegoumenos of this monastic house was the Slav Pachomios, whose linguistic identity cannot be established. His appearance in 1366, at the peak of the Serb presence on Mount Athos, suggests that he may have been a Serb.²⁶

The Slavic infiltration on Mount Athos outlined above affected 76 per cent of the Athonite monasteries still existing today. Among the 27 monastic centers covered by our study, 18 – or 67 per cent – can be associated with the prevalence of a specific linguistic group. Nine monasteries (33 per cent) showed the prevalence of Bulgarians, and 7 monasteries (26 per cent) were dominated by monks of Serb descent. Eight monastic houses accounting for 30 per cent of the total number of Athonite monasteries showed mixed Slavic presence. Mixed residence of Bulgarians and Serbs was found in six of the cases, while Russian monks appeared only in two places. Two distinct periods of manifest Slavic presence can be identified on Mount Athos: from 1348 to 1375 and from 1490 to 1560, respectively.

²⁵ W. Regel, E. Kurtz, and B. Korablev. *Actes de l'Athos VI. Actes de Philothée. Византийский Временникъ*, 20 (Приложение 1) (1913) (reprinted in Amsterdam in 1975); V. Kravari. "Nouveaux documents du monastère de Philothéou." *Travaux et mémoires*, 10 (1987), 319–54; Παυλικιάνωφ. *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 171–7.

²⁶ Παυλικιάνωφ. *Σλάβοι μοναχοί*, 178–9.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY
Compiled by Sylvia Arizanova

The bibliography includes publications that have significant contribution to the study of the history of medieval Bulgaria. They are divided into four sections: sources; general works; monographic studies and collections of articles; and specialized series and periodic publications. The studies are listed in alphabetical order and are presented with short annotations.

I. Sources

Beschevliev, V. *Die Protobulgarischen Inschriften*. Berlin 1963.

Old-Bulgarian inscriptions in Greek from the 8th–10th century are published. The volume is of high importance for research on early Bulgarian medieval history.

Бешевлиев, В. *Първобългарски надписи* [Beševliev, V. *Proto-Bulgarian Inscriptions*]. Sofia 1979 (2nd revised and complemented edition: Sofia 1992). Proto-Bulgarian inscriptions in Greek from the 8th–10th century are published, being ordered according to their content: inscriptions from chronicles, about construction, etc. The extensive commentary contributes substantially to research on Bulgarian history during that period.

Butler, T. *Monumenta Bulgarica. A Bilingual Anthology of Bulgarian Texts from 9th to the 19th Centuries*. Ann Arbor, MI 1996 (2004).

This anthology makes accessible for the first time to English reading public a wide range of Bulgarian historical sources and documents: autobiographies, laws, treatises, poetry, medieval belles lettres, lives and eulogies of saints, diplomatic correspondence, Christian cosmology, early apocrypha, and heretical writings, among others. The documents are presented in the original language and in English translation, with commentary and annotations.

Даскалова, А., М. Райкова. *Грамоти на българските царе*. [Daskalova, A., M. Raykova. *Deeds of the Bulgarian Kings*]. Sofia 2005.

Publication of the deeds of Bulgarian kings in Old-Bulgarian, together with a glossary of the words used in the text, as well as comments on their translation and meaning. A new reading of the texts is presented.

Дуйчев, Ив. *Из старата българска книжнина.* [Dujčev, I. *From the Old Bulgarian Literature*], Vols. I–II. Sofia 1943–1944.

The two volumes contain sources connected with the medieval history of Bulgaria, in the original and in translation into contemporary Bulgarian. A large number of historical documents of diverse origin are systematized.

Duichev, I. *Kiril and Methodius: Founders of Slavonic Writing. A Collection of Sources and Critical Studies.* English translation by Spass Nikolov. (East European Monographs, No. 172)

Boulder, CO 1985.

A comprehensive collection of documents, in English translation, concerning the lives of Saints Cyril and Methodius and the creation of the Slavonic alphabet. Commentaries and bibliographical references augment the value of the edition.

Гюзелев, В. *Извори за средновековната история на България (VII–XV в.) в австрийските ръкописни сбирки и архиви.* [Gjuzelev, V. *Sources on the Medieval History of Bulgaria (7th–15th Centuries) in Austrian Manuscript Collections and Archives*], Vols. I–II. Sofia 1994–2000.

The first volume contains Bulgarian, Slavonic, and Byzantine sources, the second – Italian, Latin, and German sources connected with the history of Bulgaria and the Bulgarians during the Middle Ages. The documents are given in the original and translated into contemporary Bulgarian, and accompanied by brief comments. Most of the sources are published for the first time in Bulgarian.

Гюзелев, В. *Венециански документи за историята на България и българите от XII–XV в.* [Gjuzelev, V. *Venetian Documents on the History of Bulgaria and the Bulgarians in the 12th–15th Century*]. Sofia 2001.

The volume comprises 109 documents from the State Archives of Venice, containing information on the history of Bulgaria and the Bulgarians in the 1198–1476 period. Most of these documents are published for the first time. The Venetian sources are given in the original with contemporary translation into Bulgarian. A brief commentary and a terminological glossary are added.

Гюзелев, В. *Покръстване и християнизация на българите. Извороведско изследване с приложение.* [Gjuzelev, V. *Conversion of the Bulgarians to Christianity. Source-Critical Study with Annex*]. Sofia 2006.

The publication is divided into two parts. The first part comprises a brief study of Bulgarian, Greek, Latin, and Eastern sources on the conversion of the Bulgarians to Christianity, connected predominantly with the documents included in the second part. Many of the sources are not well known and are published for the first time in Bulgarian translation with explanatory notes.

Гръцки извори за българската история/ FONTES GRAECI HISTORIAE BULGARICAE. [*Greek Sources on Bulgarian History*], Vols. I–XI. Sofia 1954–1994.

Multi-volume edition of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences containing in an easily accessible form many of the known Greek sources related to the history of Bulgaria and the Bulgarians during the Middle Ages. The documents are presented in the original language and in translation into contemporary Bulgarian, with commentary and annotations about the author and about the documentary source.

Иванов, Й. *Български старини из Македония.* [Ivanov, Y. *Bulgarian Antiquities from Macedonia*]. Sofia 1931 (Sofia 1970).

The book presents and analyzes numerous manuscripts and inscriptions in Old-Bulgarian and Greek (9th to 19th century), which are relevant to the study of individual monuments and the cultural history of the region. Most sources have been collected by the author personally while he traveled in Macedonia and Mount Athos. For some of these historical sources this is the only publication.

Латински извори за българската история/ FONTES LATINI HISTORIAE BULGARICAE. [*Latin Sources on the History of Bulgaria*], Vols. I–V. Sofia 1958–2001.

Multi-volume publication by the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences of selected Latin sources on events and personalities connected with Bulgarian history. The sources are presented in their original and in contemporary Bulgarian translation, with extensive annotations.

Petkov, K. *The Voices of Medieval Bulgaria, Seventh–Fifteenth Century: The Records of a Bygone Culture.* Leiden–Boston 2008.

This anthology is the first comprehensive collection of the records of medieval Bulgaria in English translation. It contains sources such as stone annals, works of religious instructions, anti-heretical treatises, apocrypha, and royal charters, among others. Besides a brief introduction and annotations, an up-to-date bibliography is given for each of the documents presented.

Петров, П., В. Гюзелев. *Христоматия по история на България.* [Petrov, P., V. Gjuzelev. *Anthology of Readings on the History of Bulgaria*], Vols. I–II. Sofia 1978.

A substantial number of 4th to 15th century historical texts have been systematized and published in contemporary Bulgarian translation. The publication presents medieval sources on the history of Bulgaria to a broader audience.

Popkonstantinov, K., O. Kronsteiner. *Altbulgarische Inschriften*, 1–2. Salzburg 1994–1997.

Collection of Old-Bulgarian Glagolitic and Cyrillic inscriptions from the 10th–15th century, found on the territory of the Balkan Peninsula. Brief summaries in German with annotations and extensive bibliography are added.

Търкова-Займова, В., А. Милтенова. *Историко-апокалиптичната книжнина във Византия и в средновековна България.* [Tărkoval-Zaimova, V., A. Miltenova. *Historical-Apocalyptic Literature in Byzantium and in Medieval Bulgaria*]. Sofia 1996.

Critical edition of the known medieval works of the historical-apocalyptic literature, connected with Bulgarian literature, in the original and in translation into contemporary Bulgarian, accompanied by a text-critical study. The texts are gathered and published together for the first time.

Йорданов, Ив. *Корпус на печатите на средновековна България.* [Yordanov, I. *Corpus of Seals of Medieval Bulgaria*]. Sofia 2001.

This is a comprehensive collection of the known seals from medieval Bulgaria. The material is classified and accompanied by systematic information.

II. General Works

АНГЕЛОВ, Д. *История на Византия*. Ч. I–III. [Angelov, D. *History of Byzantium*, in three parts]. Sofia 1949–1952 (numerous subsequent and revised editions: 1959–1976)

Comprehensive socio-economic, political, and cultural history of the Byzantine Empire, based on extensive source material of high importance for research on Byzantine issues. The presentation of the material is influenced by historical materialism.

БАКАЛОВ, Г. *Византия. Лекционен курс*. [Bakalov, G. *Byzantium. Lecture Course*]. Sofia 2006.

Thematically organized broad survey on the history of Byzantium. It considers core issues of Byzantine civilization, its cultural and political history, and everyday and spiritual life.

БОЖИЛОВ, ИВ., В. ГЮЗЕЛЕВ. *История на средновековна България VII–XIV век*. [Božilov, I., V. Gjuzelev, *History of Medieval Bulgaria*], Vol. I. Sofia 1999.

A comprehensive history of Bulgaria, beginning from the first reliable mentioning of the Bulgarians in historical sources until the Ottoman conquest of the medieval Bulgarian state. A number of unpublished documents are included. The emphasis is on political events, although attention is also paid on the social and cultural history of the land.

История на българите. Т. I: *От древността до края на XVI век*. Съавт. Г. Бакалов, Д. Попов, Е. Радушев, Е. Александров, П. Ангелов, П. Павлов, Т. Коев, Хр. Матанов, Цв. Степанов [History of the Bulgarians, Vol. I: *From the Antiquity until the End of the 16th Century*. Authors: G. Bakalov, D. Popov, E. Radušev, E. Alexandrov, P. Angelov, P. Pavlov, T. Koev, H. Matanov, Ts. Stepanov]. Sofia 2003.

This comprehensive survey reflects newer views in Bulgarian historiography. It devotes special attention to controversial issues connected with the socio-political, military-diplomatic, cultural, and economic life in Bulgaria.

История на България [History of Bulgaria], Vol. 2. *Първа българска държава*. Съавт. Д. Ангелов, П. Петров, Ст. Ваклинов, Б. Примов, В. Тъпкова-Займова, Г. Ценкова-Петкова, В. Гюзелев, Ив. Божилов [The

First Bulgarian State. Authors: D. Angelov, P. Petrov, S. Vaklinov, B. Primov, V. Търкова-Zaimova, G. Tsenkova-Petkova, V. Gjuzelev, I. Božilov]. Sofia, 1981; Vol. 3. *Втора българска държава*. Съавт. Д. Ангелов, П. Тивчев, Г. Цанкова-Петкова, Стр. Лишев, П. Петров, Л. Йончев, В. Гюзелев, С. Георгиева [*The Second Bulgarian State*. Authors: D. Angelov, P. Tivčev, G. Tsankova-Petkova, S. Lišev, P. Petrov, L. Jončev, V. Gjuzelev, S. Georgieva]. Sofia 1982.

The two volumes constitute a part of a multi-volume edition devoted to the comprehensive study of Bulgarian history and addressing a range of issues from political, cultural, social, and economic life. The approach is influenced to a certain extent by the ideology of Marxism.

Jireček, K. *Geschichte der Bulgaren*. Prag 1876 (Numerous subsequent editions in different languages: 1878–2008).

The study presents the first comprehensive academic history of medieval Bulgaria, using varied source material. It still attracts the attention of scholars, despite the fact that some of its views and concepts are dated.

Мутафчиев, П. *История на българския народ* [Mutafchiev, P. *History of the Bulgarian People*], Vols. 1–2. Sofia 1943 (numerous subsequent editions: 1944–1998).

The volumes are P. Mutafchiev's biggest synthetic work, intended as an exhaustive presentation of the history of the Bulgarians, which has remained unfinished. Parallel with the political events, attention is focused on culture and on the economic life in an attempt to give a historical-philosophical explanation to the facts in the historical processes, as well as the motivation for the actions of concrete individuals. The work is rich in facts and is founded on sound arguments.

Мутафчиев, П. *История на Византия* [Mutafchiev, P. *History of Byzantium*], Vol. I (395–1204). Sofia 1947.

This volume contains lectures by the author on the history of the Byzantine Empire. They reflect his views on the political and economic life of Byzantium, and on the role and importance of the empire.

Мутафчиев, П. *Лекции по история на Византия* [Mutafchiev, P. *Lectures on the History of Byzantium*], Vols. I–II. Sofia 1995 (reprinted: 2006).

The volumes contain the author's lectures on the political and economic history of the Byzantine Empire from the Early Byzantine period until the establishing of Latin power. The publication elucidates the development of the empire and its relations with the Bulgarian state.

Sakazov, I. *Bulgarische Wirtschaftsgeschichte*. Berlin – Leipzig 1929.

The volume is the first comprehensive study on the economic and socio-economic history of medieval Bulgaria. It is based on rich historical sources and outlines the general historical trends.

Златарски, В. Н. *История на българската държава през средните векове*. [Zlatarski, V. N. *History of the Bulgarian State during the Middle Ages*], Vol. I. Part 1. *Първо българско царство – Епоха на хуно-българското надмощие* [*The First Bulgarian Kingdom – Age of Hunnic-Bulgarian Supremacy*]. Sofia 1918; Vol. I. Part 2. *Първо българско царство – От славянизацията на държавата до падането на Първото царство* [*The First Bulgarian Kingdom – from the Slavonicization of the State until the Fall of the First Bulgarian Kingdom*]. Sofia 1927; Vol. II. *България под византийско владичество (1018–1187)* [*Bulgaria under Byzantine Domination (1018–1187)*]. Sofia 1934; Vol. III. *Второ българско царство – България при Асеневци (1187–1280)* [*Second Bulgarian Kingdom – Bulgaria under the Asenid Dynasty*]. Sofia 1940 (numerous subsequent editions: 1970–2007).

Highly analytical and fundamental presentation of the history of the Bulgarians during the Middle Ages, which has remained unfinished. The study is based on vast source material and has not lost its significance to this day. The volumes reflect Zlatarski's interest in the political development of medieval Bulgaria. The material is presented in encyclopedic fashion.

Златарски, В. Н. *България през XIV и XV век. Лекционен курс*. Съставители: В. Кацунов и Т. Попнеделев [Zlatarski, V. N. *Bulgaria in the 14th and 15th Centuries. Lecture Course*. Compiled by: V. Kacunov and T. Popnedelelev]. Sofia 2005.

Publication of the survey lectures of the eminent Bulgarian medievalist V. N. Zlatarski, read during the 1901/1902 academic year at the St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia. The publication is of historiographical interest, providing information about the beginnings of the academic discipline in

Bulgaria. It lacks references and bibliography Unfortunately, the compilers have transcribed incorrectly a number of names, concepts, and terms.

III. Monographic Studies and Collections of Articles

Ангелов, Д. *Богомилството в България. Произход, същност и разпространение* [Angelov, D. *Bogomilism in Bulgaria. Origin, Nature, and Propagation*]. Sofia 1947 (numerous subsequent revised and complemented editions: 1961–1993; in Italian: *Il Bogomilismo. Un'eresia medievale bulgara*. Roma 1979; in Japanese: Tokyo 1986).

The study traces the emergence and spreading of Bogomilism in the Bulgarian lands, the views of its followers, and their persecution, on the basis of Bulgarian, Latin, and Greek sources. The view presented under the influence of historical materialism is that Bogomilism was not merely a religious movement, but that it was also a social movement directed against the official power.

Ангелов, Д. *Аграрните отношения в Северна и Средна Македония през XIV век* [Angelov, D. *Agrarian Relations in Northern and Central Macedonia in the 14th Century*]. Sofia 1958.

The study addresses economic relations in Macedonia in the 14th century, viewed through the prism of historical materialism. A number of documentary sources have been studied, mostly connected with the monasteries in the region, land ownership, property-based stratification, and the plight of dependent people.

Ангелов, Д. *Образуване на българската народност* [Angelov, D. *Formation of the Bulgarian Ethnicity*]. Sofia 1971 (second revised and completed edition: Sofia 1981; in German: Angelov, D. *Die Entstehung des bulgarischen Volkes*. Berlin 1980).

The monograph examines the ethnic communities that served as the basis for the formation of the Bulgarian ethnicity: Thracians, Slavs, and Proto-Bulgarians, as well as the factors influencing that process. The period during which the awareness of an ethnic community was formed is traced, and light is thrown on the importance of the adoption of Christianity and the spreading of the Slavonic script.

Ангелов, Д. *Проучвания по византийска история* [Angelov, D. *Studies on Byzantine History*]. Sofia 2007.

A collection of studies on Bogomilism in the Byzantine Empire, the role of the Byzantine emperor, land-ownership relations, Byzantine influence on medieval Bulgaria, etc. Extensive source material is used in the research, which is of major importance for clarifying a number of issues in Byzantine and Proto-Bulgarian history.

Ангелов, П. *Българската средновековна дипломация* [Angelov, P. *Bulgarian Medieval Diplomacy*]. Sofia 1988 (2nd edition: Sofia 2004).

The study analyzes numerous documents connected with medieval Bulgarian diplomacy between the 7th and the 14th century. Special attention is focused on its aims and principles, on its argumentation, the conducting of negotiations, personal meetings between rulers, use of correspondence, diplomatic missions, and the institutions engaged in diplomatic activities.

Ангелов, П. *България и българите в представите на византийците (VII–XIV век)* [Angelov, P. *Bulgaria and the Bulgarians in the Perceptions of the Byzantines*]. Sofia 1999.

The study addresses a hitherto poorly researched theme of the “image of the other”: the viewpoint of the Byzantine chroniclers on the Bulgarian land, on the outward appearance and mentality of the Bulgarians and their rulers during the First and Second Bulgarian Kingdoms. The book explores the tensions between the constructed notions and reality, and considers the historiographical value of historical sources.

Бакалов, Г. *Средновековният български владетел. Титулатура и инсигнии* [Bakalov, G. *Medieval Bulgarian Rulers. Titles and Insignia*]. Sofia 1985 (2nd edition: Sofia 1995).

The monograph examines the genesis of Bulgarian dynastic titles in the 7th–14th century, and their links with the dynastic institution in Byzantium. Convincing evidence is adduced in support of the direct dependence of titles and insignia on the political state of the Bulgarian medieval state and on the power of the ruler.

Beševliev, V., and Irmscher, J., eds. *Antike und Mittelalter in Bulgarien. (Berliner byzantinesche Arbeiten, 21)* Berlin 1960.

A broad survey on Bulgaria in Antiquity and in the Middle Ages, organized by regions: Sofia, the Danube Bulgaria, Southern Bulgaria, and the Black Sea coast. The book offers a comprehensive representation of the state of scholarship.

Бешевлиев, В. *Първобългарите – история, бит и култура* [Beševliev, V. *The Proto-Bulgarians – History, Way of Life, and Culture*]. Plovdiv 2008. The book presents the cumulative results of many years of research conducted by the author on the history of the Proto-Bulgarians, tracing their political history from the 4th century until 852 AD. Considerable attention is devoted to their way of life and culture, including linguistic specificities, inscriptions, state structure, religion, and customs.

Биярски, Ив. *Институциите на средновековна България. Второ българско царство (XII–XIV век)* [Biliarsky, I. *The Institutions of Medieval Bulgaria. The Second Bulgarian Kingdom (12th–14th Century)*]. Sofia 1998. The monograph examines the historical evidence on the institutions in the Bulgarian state in the 12th–14th century. The titles and the services in the central and in the provincial administration are studied on the basis of extensive historical sources and literature, and a number of debatable issues are also indicated.

Божилев, Ив. *Цар Симеон Велики (893–927): Златният век на средновековна България* [Božilov, I. *Tsar Symeon the Great (893–927): The Golden Age of Medieval Bulgaria*]. Sofia 1983.

The monograph contains historical and factual material on the life and reign of the Bulgarian tsar Symeon, and offers a comprehensive study devoted to the “Golden Age” of Bulgarian culture.

Божилев, Ив. *Фамилията на Асеновци (1186–1460). Генеалогия и просопография* [Božilov, I. *The Asenid Dynastic Family (1186–1460). Genealogy and Prosopography*]. Sofia 1985 (reprinted: Sofia 1994).

The study is based on comprehensive analysis of evidence on the life of the individuals connected with the Asenids, and it outlines well the complicated family relations and marriage links in the 12th–14th century. A parallel line of research covers events connected with the ruling family and its links with Byzantium. The study is a major contribution to the development of medieval Bulgarian genealogy and prosopography.

Божилев, Ив. *Българите във Византийската империя* [Božilov, I. *The Bulgarians in the Byzantine Empire*]. Sofia 1995.

A prosopographic study on the Bulgarians in the Byzantine Empire, summarizing the information on them, clarifying a number of aspects of their life, and addressing historical events. The fate of Bulgarians outside the borders of the medieval Bulgarian state is examined in detail for the first time.

Browning, R. *Byzantium and Bulgaria. A Comparative Study across the Early Medieval Frontier*. Berkley – Los Angeles 1975.

A comparative study of institutions, socio-economic processes, and cultural achievements in medieval Bulgaria and in the Byzantine Empire, which is essential for elucidating their relations.

Български средновековни градове и крепости [*Bulgarian Medieval Cities and Fortresses*], Vol. I. *Градове и крепости по Дунав и Черно море* [*Cities and Fortresses along the Danube and the Black Sea Coast*]. Compiled by A. Kuzev and V. Gjuzev. Varna 1981.

The volume systematizes the information on the historical emergence and development of a number of Bulgarian cities and fortresses along the Danube River and along the Black Sea coast. It provides rich visual material.

Цанкова-Петкова, Г. *За аграрните отношения в средновековна България (XI–XIII в.)* [Cankova-Petkova, G. *On Agrarian Relations in Medieval Bulgaria (11th–13th Century)*]. Sofia 1964.

The book examines the economic relations on the territories inhabited by Bulgarians, based on diverse source material, categories of population, types of settlements, etc. In spite of being influenced by historical materialism, the study is nevertheless valuable for shedding light on the economic situation of the Bulgarians in the 11th–13th century.

Чолова, Цв. *Естественонаучните знания в средновековна България* [Čolova, C. *Knowledge of the Natural Sciences in Medieval Bulgaria*]. Sofia 1988.

The book is a comprehensive study on the scientific knowledge of the Bulgarians during the Middle Ages in the areas of medicine, biology, cosmography, etc. It uses a range of primary sources and relevant studies.

Данчева-Василева, А. *България и Латинската империя (1204–1261)* [Dančeva–Vassileva, A. *Bulgaria and the Latin Empire (1204–1261)*]. Sofia 1985.

The study examines the reign of the Bulgarian kings Kaloyan, Boril, and Ivan Assen II, as well as their relations with the Latin Empire. The sources of various origin used in the book create a comprehensive idea about the political events in the first half of the 13th century.

Димитров, Хр. *Българо-унгарски отношения през Средновековието* [Dimitrov, H. *Bulgarian-Hungarian Relations during the Middle Ages*]. Sofia 1998.

Bulgarian-Hungarian relations during the Middle Ages are examined and some debatable statements are made. The study examines some little known Hungarian documents from the 14th century .

Дуйчев, Ив. *Рилският светец и неговата обител* [Dujčev, I. *The Saint from Rila and His Monastic Retreat*]. Sofia 1947 (reprinted: Sofia 1990).

The author has utilized all known sources about St. John of Rila to examine his life, the fate of his relics, and their significance for the history of the medieval Bulgarian state, with analysis of some debatable issues. Special attention is focused on the Rila Monastery founded by the saint, and on its importance for Bulgarian culture. A comprehensive study of the entire life of St. John of Rila is made for the first time.

Dujčev, I. *Medievo-bizantino-slavo*, I–III. Roma 1965–1975; IV₁₋₂. Sofia 1996.

The five volumes by the eminent Bulgarian byzantinist and medievalist include his studies in English, Italian, German, and French, published in Bulgaria and elsewhere. The publications are of major importance for research on Bulgarian-Byzantine contacts.

Dujčev, I. *Slavia Orthodoxa. Collected Studies on the History of the Slavic Middle Ages*. London 1970.

Collection of articles on Slavic and Byzantine history and culture, published in different countries, mostly in Russian.

Дуйчев, Ив. *Българското средновековие*. [Dujčev, I. *Bulgarian Middle Ages*]. Sofia 1972.

A key study of Bulgarian political and cultural history from the 6th to the 14th centuries.

Дуйчев, Ив. *Проучвания върху средновековната българска история и култура* [Dujčev, I. *Studies on Medieval Bulgarian History and Culture*]. Sofia 1981.

The volume contains studies on political and cultural issues, analysis of historical sources, onomastic and etymological research. These studies introduce new historical sources and address poorly researched subjects, as, for example, the geographic knowledge of the Bulgarians during the Middle Ages.

Дуйчев, Ив. *Византия и славянския свят*. [Dujčev, I. *Byzantium and the Slavic World*], Vol. I. *Избрани произведения* [Selected Works]. Sofia 1998.

This collection contains articles in Bulgarian translation that have not been published in Bulgaria. They present masterful insights about the relations between the Byzantine Empire and the Slavic peoples. Special attention is devoted to the complicated relations, the common Eastern Orthodox faith, and the cultural exchanges, which have given grounds to the author to refer to a “Byzantine commonwealth,” or to “Byzantine-Slavonic civilization.”

Гюзелев, В. *Княз Борис Първи. България през втората половина на IX век* [Gjuzelev, V. *Prince Boris I. Bulgaria in the Second Half of the 9th Century*]. Sofia 1969.

The monograph is devoted to events in the second half of the 9th century, the conversion of the Bulgarians to Christianity, and the Bulgarian ruler who achieved it. The book is based on numerous sources of different origin and it presents in detail the reign of Prince Boris I and his policy aimed at consolidating Christian faith and the newly-established Church.

Gjuzelev, V. *The Adoption of Christianity in Bulgaria*. Sofia 1975 (the same in Spanish: *La conversion de Bulgaria al cristianismo*. Sofia 1976).

The book is devoted to the conversion of Bulgarians to Christianity and to the founding of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church in the 9th century.

Gjuzelev, V. *The Proto-Bulgarians. Introduction in the History of Bulgaria of Asparoukh.* Sofia 1979 (the same in French: *Les Protobulgares. Introduction à l'histoire de la Bulgarie d'Asparoukh.* Sofia 1979).

The study is devoted to the origin and the early history of the Bulgarians in the 4th–7th century. The author's views are grounded on diverse historical evidence.

Гюзелев, В. *Училища, скриптории, библиотеки и знания в България XIII–XIV в.* [Gjuzelev, V. *Schools, Scriptoria, Libraries, and Knowledge in Bulgaria in the 13th–14th Century*]. Sofia 1985.

The study summarizes the evidence in the sources on the non-material culture of the Bulgarians, the centers of literature, education, literacy, and scientific knowledge in the 13th–14th century. Little used sources are included. The information is systematized and analyzed according to historical periods with respect to Bulgarian men of letters, and authorities ordering books and libraries.

Gjuzelev, V. *Forschungen zur Geschichte Bulgariens im Mittelalter.* Wien 1986.

The volume includes a wide range of articles on the political and cultural history of Medieval Bulgaria from the 6th till the 15th century. Among the topics considered is the formation of the Bulgarian state, the relations between Bulgaria and the Byzantine Empire, the Papacy, and other countries, and the administrative organization of the state during the 7th–9th century.

Gjuzelev, V. *Medieval Bulgaria – Byzantine Empire – Black Sea – Venice – Genoa.* Villach 1988.

The studies are devoted to medieval Bulgarian history and to the complicated political and economic relations between Bulgaria, the Byzantine Empire, Venice, and Genoa., based on rich source material.

Gjuzelev, V. *Bulgarien zwischen Orient und Okzident. Die Grundlagen seiner geistigen Kultur vom 13. bis zum 15. Jahrhundert.* Wien – Köln – Weimar 1993.

The volume is devoted to Bulgarian medieval non-material culture in the context of the relations between East and West in the 13th–15th century. Issues connected with the role of the clergy, education, libraries, etc. are studied.

Gjuzelev, V. *Mittelalterliches Bulgarien – Quellen, Geschichte, Hauptstädte und Kultur*. Istanbul 2001.

This collection of studies covers a wide range of issues about the life and development of medieval Bulgaria.

Гюзелев, В., Ив. БОЖИЛОВ. *История на Добруджа* [Gjuzelev, V., I. Božilov. *History of Dobrudža*], Vol. 2. *Средновековие* [Middle Ages]. Veliko Tŕrnovo 2005.

This general study covers the history of Dobrudža from the 6th to the 15th century, and notes the importance of that region for Bulgarian history during the period. Extensive historical evidence has been analyzed for the purpose of the research, some of which is presented for the first time.

Гюзелев, В. *Кавханите и ичиргу боилите на Българското ханство-царство (VII–XI в.)* [Gjuzelev, V. *The Kavchans and the Ičirgu-Boils in the Bulgarian Khaganate-Kingdom (7th–11th Century)*]. Plovdiv 2007.

The study examines the issues connected with two of the most important institutions during the First Bulgarian Kingdom, which have no analogue in other European states: the *Kavchan* and the *Ičirgu-boila*. Their place and functions in state governance are examined through careful analysis of the information in the sources.

Гюзелев, В. *Папството и българите през Средновековието (IX–XV в.)* [Gjuzelev, V. *The Papacy and the Bulgarians during the Middle Ages (9th–15th Century)*]. Plovdiv 2009.

The monograph presents the relations between the Papacy and the Bulgarians from the 9th to the 15th century. The first part of the study is devoted to the history of the medieval Papacy; the second part traces its links with Bulgaria and in this it makes a substantial contribution; and the third part presents translations of various documents illustrating the diversity of these relations.

Илиев, И. Св. Климент Охридски. Живот и дело [Iliev, I. *St. Clement of Ohrid. Life and Work*]. Plovdiv 2010.

The monographic study presents a fuller and more detailed image of the Bulgarian apostle and teacher St. Clement of Ohrid (†916) on the basis of newer historical research. The sources on his life and literary activity are analyzed. The book includes complete translations of the *Vitae* of the Bulgarian saint by

Theophylactus of Ohrid and Demetrios Chomatenos.

Илиев, И. *Охридският архиепископ Димитър Хоматиан и българите* [Iliev, I. *The Archbishop of Ohrid Demetrios Chomatenos and the Bulgarians*]. Sofia 2010.

The study analyses and systematizes the information in the historical sources on Demetrios Chomatenos, Archbishop of Ohrid, and his attitude towards the Bulgarians in the context of historical events in the early 13th century.

Каймакамова, М. *Българска средновековна историопис (от края на VII до първата четвърт на XV в.)* [Kaimakamova, M. *Bulgarian Medieval Historiography from the End of the 7th until the First Quarter of the 15th Century*]. Sofia 1990.

The study examines Bulgarian historiography from the time of the emergence of the Bulgarian medieval state until the end of its existence in the 14th century, as well as the historical prerequisites for its emergence, development, and significance. A classification is made of the historical works, special attention being devoted to chronicles, historical inscriptions, marginal notes, apocrypha, and translated works by Byzantine authors.

Коледаров, П. *Политическа география на средновековната българска държава* [Koledarov, P. *Political Geography of the Medieval Bulgarian State*]. Part I. *Om 681 до 1081 г.* [From 681 until 1081]. Sofia 1979; Part II. *Om 1186 до 1396 г.* [From 1186 until 1396]. Sofia 1989.

The two volumes trace the changes in the territorial borders of the Bulgarian medieval state in the context of the political events during the entire period of its existence. The study is important for research on the political geography of medieval Bulgaria. A number of maps are included, which give a visual idea about the dynamic changes of the Bulgarian political borders.

Литаврин, Г.Г. *Болгария и Византия XI–XII вв.* [Litavrin, G. G. *Bulgaria and Byzantium in the 11th–12th Century*]. Moscow 1960 (published in Bulgarian: Литаврин, Г. Г. *България и Византия XI–XII век*. Sofia 1987).

The monograph is devoted to the political, social, and economic history of the Bulgarians in the 11th–12th centuries. It is a sound contribution to research on Bulgarian history during that period.

Матанов, Хр. *Югозападните български земи през XIV век* [Matanov, H. *The Southwestern Bulgarian Lands in the 14th Century*]. Sofia 1986.

The study is devoted to the political events in the southwestern Bulgarian lands from the end of the 13th century – a period marking the onset of the Serbian incursion into that region until the emergence of small autonomous principalities. The complicated political relations in the geographic region of Macedonia during that period are clarified.

Миятев, Кр. *Архитектурата в средновековна България* [Miyatev, K. *Architecture in Medieval Bulgaria*]. Sofia 1965. (the same in German: *Die mittelalterliche Baukunst in Bulgarien*. Sofia 1974).

The book is a comprehensive and richly illustrated study on the evolution of Bulgarian architecture during the Middle Ages. It is the result of a thoughtful academic synthesis, based on archaeological excavations *in situ*. It uses typological approach in the analysis of architecture.

Мутафчиев, П. *Владетелите на Просек. Страници из историята на българите в края на XII и началото на XIII век* [Mutafchiev, P. *The Rulers of Prosek. Pages from the History of the Bulgarians at the End of the 12th and the Beginning of the 13th century*]. *Сборник на Българската академия на науките* [Miscellany of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences], 1(1913), 1–85 (subsequent editions: 1973–1999).

The study examines the activities of the two rulers of Prosek – Dobromir Chriz and Strez, and offers convincing evidence about their links with the Asenids and with the Bulgarian state. Based on extensive source material, it reconstructs the historical context of political events in the Balkans during the 12th–13th century. The study is of major importance to the history of the Balkans in general.

Ников, П. *Българо-унгарските отношения от 1257 до 1277 година. Историко-критично изследване* [Nikov, P. *Bulgarian-Hungarian Relations from 1257 until 1277. Historical-Critical Study*]. *Сборник на Българската академия на науките* [Miscellany of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences], 9 (1920), 1–220.

This pioneering study examines the political relations between Bulgarians and Hungarians in the northwestern Bulgarian lands on the basis of precise and critical analysis of the sources. The book has not lost its importance to this day.

Ников, П. *История на Видинското княжество до 1323 г.* [Nikov, P. *History of the Vidin Principality until 1323*]. ГСУ (ИФФ) [*Annual Bulletin of the University of Sofia, Faculty of History and Philosophy*], 18 (1922), 1–124. The study analyzes in detail the prehistory and the events leading to the differentiation of Vidin and the area around it as an autonomous land. The author reconstructs the history of the Vidin Principality on the basis of his critical analysis of little studied sources.

Николов, Г. Н. *Централизъм и регионализъм в ранносредновековна България (края на VII – началото на XI век)* [Nikolov, G. N. *Centralism and Regionalism in Early Medieval Bulgaria (Late 7th – Early 11th Century)*]. Sofia 2005.

The monograph studies the power organization of the Bulgarian kingdom and of state institutions on the basis of numerous sources. The research addresses two major processes in medieval Bulgarian state organization: centralism and regionalism, and contributes significantly to elucidating the factors responsible for their emergence. In this context, it examines the importance of the geographic factor, the place of Bulgarian aristocracy, the Bulgarian cities and fortresses, etc.

Николова, Б. *Устройство и управление на Българската православна църква (IX–XIV в.)* [Nikolova, B. *Structure and Governance of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (9th–14th Century)*]. Sofia 1997.

The study is devoted to Bulgarian Church history during the Middle Ages. It examines the governance structures, their emergence and development. Special attention is paid to the Bulgarian bishoprics and to the Church administration. The author utilizes a wide range of primary sources and recent research.

Панова, Р. *Столичният град в културата на средновековна България* [Panova, R. *The Capital City in the Culture of Medieval Bulgaria*]. Sofia 1995.

The book researches the place and the significance of the capital city for the culture of the Bulgarians, as a political, religious, and spiritual center, as well as the factors conditioning it. The information on the topic in the sources is summarized and analyzed.

Пириватрић, С. *Самуилова држава. Обим и карактер*. [Pirivatrić, S. *Samuil's State: Its Extent and Character*]. Belgrade 1997 (the same in Bulgarian: Sofia 2000).

An objective study by the young Serbian byzantinist on the history of Bulgaria (971–1018). It examines the phenomenon of establishment of a new center around Ohrid, being in the peripheral regions of a state, a center housing all the most important state institutions which spread their influence over a broad territory of the Balkan Peninsula.

Полывянный, Д. *Культурное своеобразие средневековой Болгарии в контексте византийско-славянской общности IX–XV веков* [Polivjanniū, D. *Cultural Specificity of Medieval Bulgaria in the Context of the Byzantine-Slavic Community in the 9th–15th Century*]. Ivanovo 2000.

Monographic study on the specificities of medieval Bulgarian culture and its links with Byzantine literature and art.

Рашев, Р. *Старобългарски укрепления на Долни Дунав (VII–XI век)* [Rašev, R. *Old-Bulgarian Fortifications along the Lower Danube (7th–11th Century)*]. Varna 1982.

The monograph examines Old-Bulgarian fortresses and earth embankments from the period of the First Bulgarian Kingdom. It analyzes a large amount of archaeological evidence.

Рашев, Р. *Българската езическа култура VII–IX век* [Rašev, R. *Bulgarian Pagan Culture in the 7th–9th Century*]. Sofia 2008.

The monograph examines Bulgarian culture in the 7th–9th century on the basis of different types of historical sources. Its analysis of a comprehensive body of historical evidence identifies various aspects of pagan culture during that period.

Schreiner, P. *Studia Byzantino-Bulgaria*. Wien 1986.

The articles in this collection on Bulgarian and Byzantine medieval history address issues connected with historical sources and the relations between Bulgaria and Byzantium, among others.

Шрайнер, П. *Многообразие и съперничество. Избрани студии за обществото и културата във Византия и средновековна България*.

[Schreiner, P. *Variety and Rivalry: A Miscellany of Selected Studies*] (= *Studia Slavico-Byzantina et Mediaevalia Europensia*, Vol. 9). Sofia 2004.

This is a collection of translated articles on the society and history of Byzantium and Bulgaria. Among the issues discussed are the interrelations of palace, monastery, church, and popular culture.

Sergheraert, G. *Syméon le Grand (893–927)*. Paris 1960.

The monograph is devoted to the reign of the Bulgarian tsar Symeon (893–927), and it is of major importance for research on the political history during that period.

Simeonova, L. *Diplomacy of the Letter and the Cross. Photios, Bulgaria and the Papacy. 860s–880s*. Amsterdam 1998.

The book examines the relations between the Byzantine Patriarch Photios, the Bulgarian state, and the Papacy, based on extensive historical evidence.

Снегаров, Ив. *История на Охридската архиепископия* [Snegarov, I. *History of the Archbishopric of Ohrid*], Vol. I. *От основаването и до завладяването на Балканския полуостров от турците* [From Its Founding until the Conquering of the Balkan Peninsula by the Turks]. Sofia 1924 (2nd edition: Sofia 1995)

The study is devoted to the history of the Archbishopric of Ohrid from its founding until the Ottoman conquest. It is based on rich source material and makes a major contribution to the study of the Church institutions, the territorial borders, and the individuals connected with the Archbishopric of Ohrid.

Тъпкова-Займова, В. *Нашествия и етнически промени на Балканите през VI–VII в.* [Tăpkova-Zaimova, V. *Incursions and Ethnic Changes in the Balkans in the 6th–7th Century*]. Sofia 1966.

The study traces the reasons and the political context connected with the settling of Slavs and Proto-Bulgarians on the territory of the Balkan Peninsula in the 6th–7th century.

Тъпкова-Займова, В. *Долни Дунав – гранична зона на византийския Запад (Към историята на северните и североизточните български земи, края на X–XII век)* [Tăpkova-Zaimova, V. *The Lower Danube – a Border*

Area for the Western Byzantine Empire (On the History of the Northern and Northeastern Bulgarian Lands at the End of 10th–12th Century). Sofia 1976. The study focuses on events in the 10th–12th century, connected with the uprisings of the Bulgarians against Byzantine rule, and its response to the incursions of Magyars, Cumans, Pechenegs, and Uzi. The historical interpretation is based on careful study of numerous historical sources.

Тъпкова-Займова, В. „Българи родом...” *Комитопулите в летописната и историографската традиция* [Tăpkova-Zaimova, V. “Bulgarians Born in...” *The Komitopuls in the Annalistic and Historiographical Tradition*]. Veliko Tărnovo 2009.

Almost all known sources about the sons of the Bulgarian rebel (*komit*) Nikola and the events connected with them are published, together with information about the author of the source, the historical document, and comments. The Bulgarian origin of these men is convincingly demonstrated through the evidence in chronicles and in the historiographical tradition.

Тăпкова-Займова, V. *Byzance, la Bulgarie, les Balkans*. Plovdiv 2010.

This is a wide ranging collection of 72 articles on the medieval history of the Byzantine Empire and Bulgaria. The studies, originally published between 1979 and 2009, are written in Bulgarian and other languages.

Ваклинов, Ст. *Формиране на старобългарската култура (VI–XI век)* [Vaklinov, S. *Formation of Old-Bulgarian Culture (6th–11th Century)*]. Sofia 1977.

A study of the origins of the material and non-material culture of the Old Bulgarians on the basis of a large number of archaeological monuments. The characteristic features and the material manifestations of the culture of Slavs and Bulgarians are examined in the context of the political events until its consolidation into an integral whole.

Велков, В. *Градът в Тракия и Дакия през късната античност (IV–VI век). Проучвания и материали* [Velkov, V. *The City in Thrace and in Dacia during the Late Antiquity (4th–6th Century)*]. Sofia 1959.

The monograph systematizes archaeological and historical evidence on the city in the Eastern Balkan lands from the end of the 3rd until the 6th century. Historical events during that period, the administrative system of Thrace

and Dacia, the internal organization of the cities, various aspects of the socio-economic life, etc. are examined. An analysis is made of the historical development, which reveals continuity between certain ancient and medieval cities, refuting older views on deserted urban centers at the time when the Slavs settled there.

IV. Specialized Series and Periodic Publications

Bulgaria pontica medii aevi, Vols. I–VII. Sofia–Burgas 1981–2008.

A series containing articles and reports delivered at medievalist symposia held in the town of Nessebar on the history and culture of the Black Sea region, and the relations with the Mediterranean region.

Bulgaria mediaevalis, Vol. I. Sofia – Plovdiv 2010.

Newly-launched medievalist series with studies and publications of sources on the history of medieval Bulgaria and Europe, in Bulgarian, English, French, German, Russian, and other languages. It contains a useful section on book reviews and bibliographies.

Български старини [*Bulgarian Antiquities*], Vols. I–XII. Sofia 1906–1936.

A series for text-critical publications of Old-Bulgarian literary monuments and documents (Gospels, treatises, edicts, etc.), among which the 10th century works by Presbyter Kosmas, the *Synodicon* of the Bulgarian Church from the 13th–14th century, etc.

Byzantinobulgarica, Vols. I–IX. Sofia 1962–1995.

A series published by the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, containing articles and publications of sources in English, German, French, and other languages, with the participation of Bulgarian and foreign scholars.

Palaeobulgarica, Vols. I–XXXIV. Sofia 1976–2011.

Historical-linguistic medievalist journal published regularly with four issues per year. The articles and communications published are in Bulgarian, English, French, German, and Russian. The journal enjoys great popularity among the national and the international academic communities.

Pliska – Preslav, Vols. I–IX. Sofia 1979–2003.

Thematic series covering archaeological and historical research on the first two medieval Bulgarian capitals (680–971).

Tsarevgrad Tŭrnov, Vols. I–V. Sofia 1973–1992.

Thematic series covering archaeological and historical research on the third medieval Bulgarian capital: Tŭrnovo (1186–1393). *Asparoukh*. Sofia 1979 (the same in French: *Les Protobulgares. Introduction à l'histoire de la Bulgarie d'Asparoukh*. Sofia 1979).

The study is devoted to the origin and the early history of the Bulgarians in the 4th–7th century. The author's views are grounded on diverse historical evidence.

INDEX

- Abbasid dynasty, 134
Achelous (Anchialo, Anchialus), river, 43, 160
Achilles, son of Peleus, 69, 170–171
Adam, biblical forefather, 123, 179
Adrian II, pope, 59
Agathias of Myrina, 105
Albania, 84, 190, 222, 224
Alexandria, town, 209, 226,
Alexios I Komnenos, Byzantine emperor, 214, 220, 232, 234, 247
Alfred the Great, Anglo-Saxon king, 109, 164
al-Hassan al-Hamadani, 134
Alousian, Bulgarian nobleman, 155
Al-Tabari, 162
Altai, mountain, 105, 109
Altärmerčokubostan, town, 230
Anania Shirakatsi, 113
Anastasius I (Flavius Anastasius), Byzantine emperor, 126
Anastasius the Librarian (Anastasius Bibliothecarius or Guillelmus Bibliothecarius), Head
of archives and antipope, 59, 211
Andronikos I Komnenos, Byzantine emperor, 247
Ankara, town, 91
Ansbert, 69, 70
Anthony (Marcus Antonius), 49
Anthony Bagaš, 262
Antioch, town, 209, 226, 234
Aristotle, 33
Asen I, tsar, 69, 125
Asenids, Bulgarian dynasty, 29, 185–187, 241, 244, 273, 276, 283
Asparuch (Isperih, Esperich, Ispor), Bulgar ruler, 64, 105, 106, 112–114, 120–122, 127
Athanasios of Alexandria, Coptic pope, 59
Athanasios Philanthropenos, 195
Attila, ruler of the Huns, 108–110, 114, 170
Augustus, Roman emperor, 33, 49
Avitohol, mythical Bulgar ruler, 105, 108–109, 111–112, 170
Azov Sea, 105, 109, 112

Baian, Avar khan, 53
Baian, Bulgar aristocrat, 139, 142–143
Balshi (Ballsh), town, 190
Bari, town, 240
Basarabi, village, 197–198, 200–201, 203
Basil II the Bulgar-Slayer (Basilios II Porphyrogenitus), Byzantine emperor, 6, 63, 64, 133,
135, 137, 214, 217–219, 227, 228, 238, 240–242, 244

Basil of Tŭrnovo, archbishop, 72
 Basil the Great (Basil of Caesarea), bishop, 59, 157
 Bayezid I Ildirim, Ottoman sultan, 88, 91
 Bdin (Badin, Vidin), town, 125–126
 Beda Venerabilis, 110
 Belgrade, town, 176, 211
 Belovo, village, 95–98
 Bezmer, Bulgar ruler, 112
 Bithynia, region, 231
 Black Sea, 74, 75, 136, 201, 234, 276, 277, 280, 288
 Bogomil, 11, 28, 44, 45, 48, 63, 78, 235
 Boril, tsar, 46, 64, 221, 225, 278
 Boris (Boris–Mikhail), Bulgar khan, prince, 14, 45, 56–59, 72, 115, 144–145, 162, 164–167, 174, 178, 183, 189–192, 198–199, 202, 204–205, 222, 224, 226, 237, 239, 252, 279
 Boris and Gleb, Russian princes, 74
 Boris II, tsar, 155
 Bregalnica, river, 66, 224
 Brindisi, town, 72
 Bulgar, chieftain, 114
 Bulgarian Kingdom, 14, 65, 70, 73, 83, 117, 120, 122, 124, 125, 127, 128, 154, 194, 199, 206, 222, 224, 228, 238, 240–244, 273, 275, 276, 281, 284, 285
 Byzantine Empire, 3, 11, 20, 29, 43, 47, 116, 130, 147, 155, 167, 169, 174, 185, 189, 217, 229, 232, 235, 239–242, 251, 252, 257, 271–273, 275, 277, 279, 280, 286, 287

Caesar (Gaius Julius Caesar), 49
 Candaules, king of the ancient Kingdom of Lydia, 157
 Caspian Sea, 105, 109
 Cassiodorus (Flavius Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator), 110
 Cato (Marcus Porcius Cato), 33, 49, 50
 Černomen, village, 83–84, 91, 264
 Ceylon, 51
 Chaldia, theme on the south coast of the Black Sea, 234
 Chernoglavtsi, village, 196, 200–202
 Cicero (Marcus Tullius Cicero), 50
 Clement of Ohrid, 27, 65, 189–192, 199, 202, 204, 220–224, 232, 233, 237, 248–250, 252, 281
 Cleopatra (Cleopatra VII Philopator), pharaoh of Ancient Egypt, 49
 Constantine Bodin, prince, 184
 Constantine I, archbishop, 246
 Constantine V Copronymus, Byzantine Emperor, 103
 Constantine Manasses, 2, 16, 124, 125, 128, 131, 140, 151
 Constantine Pacik, 56
 Constantine IV Pogonatus, Byzantine emperor, 126, 127
 Constantine VII Porphyrogenetus, Byzantine emperor, 60, 169, 230
 Constantine of Preslav, bishop, 145, 167

Constantine the Great, Byzantine emperor, 37, 41, 178, 179, 183
 Constantinople (Tsarigrad), 20, 42, 51, 52, 54, 56, 58, 59, 61–63, 71–73, 80, 115, 118, 121, 125, 129, 130, 132, 135–137, 141, 142, 145–148, 152, 156, 158–162, 169, 171, 174, 178, 180, 182, 187, 195, 196, 205, 209–211, 213, 214, 216–219, 226, 229–232, 234, 235, 239, 242, 244–247, 250, 254
 Cosmas Indicopleutes, 51
 Croesus, king of the ancient Kingdom of Lydia, 157
 Cyril (Constantine–Cyril the Philosopher), apostle of the Slavs, 3, 60, 66–67, 158, 211, 220–222, 235, 237, 252, 268

 Dacia Mediterranea, 94, 215, 216, 287
 Damian, archbishop, 225–228
 Danube, river, 14, 53, 93, 96–97, 100, 105–106, 110, 112–114, 121, 126–128, 136, 142, 149, 159, 174, 200, 221, 276–277, 285–286
 David, archbishop, 212, 227–228
 David, biblical king of the united Kingdom of Israel, 157–159, 176
 Debărca, 223
 Debrišta, village, 223
 Demetrios Chomatenos, archbishop, 190, 192, 218, 231, 244–249, 282
 Demetrios Kydones (Demetrius Cydonius), 75
 Demosthenes, 33
 Desimir of Moravia, Bulgarian prince, 66
 Devol, village, 189, 204
 Dimitar Kantakouzenos, 76
 Dimitar, župan, 62
 Dimitri, patriarch, 225
 Dionysius the Areopagite, 75
 Dniester, river, 113
 Dobrudža (Dobrudja, Dobrudzha), historical region shared by Bulgaria and Romania, 62, 197, 206, 239, 281
 Don-Donetsk, region, 112
 Dorostolon (Drastar, Dristra, Silistra), town, 153, 162, 218, 225–227
 Doulo, Bulgar clan, 105, 108–113, 153, 163, 170
 Drougoubitai, 223–224
 Dubrovnik, 7, 15, 18
 Dumbraveni, village, 210
 Durostorum, 121
 Dyrrachion (Epidamnus, Dyrrhachium, Durrës, Durazzo), 72, 126–127, 231–232, 247

 Edessa (Voden, Vudena or Vodina), town, 226
 Ernach, see Irnik
 Eusthatius Boilas, 196
 Eusthatius of Thessaloniki, 234
 Euthymius, patriarch, 15, 64, 65, 75, 78, 185, 186, 234

Frederick II Barbarossa, German Holy Roman Emperor, 69

Gabriel (Germanos-Gabriel), archbishop, 211, 227

Gavril of Lesnovo, 248

Genoa, 15, 18, 280

George Akropolites, 64

George Amartolus, 125

George Skylitzes, governor of Serdica, 250

George Sursubul, 238

George Vardan, bishop, 245

George Voitech, 240

Georgios Tornikes, 232

Gerasimos Radonja – 262

Glavinitza, village, 189–190

Gorazd (Conrad), Moravian disciple of Methodius, 212, 220, 222, 224

Gostun, Bulgar ruler, 111–112

Gregorius Presbyter, 170

Gregorius, patriarch, 225

Gregory I, pope, 216

Gregory of Nazianzus (Gregory the Theologian), archbishop, 59, 79

Gregory of Sinai, 75

Gregory of Tours, 110

Gregory Tsamblak (Gregorije Camblak), metropolitan, 75, 78

Gyges, the founder of the third dynasty of Lydian kings, 157

Hambarli, village, 53, 56

Hellas, province, 49, 96, 97

Hemus (Balkan), mountains, 20, 93, 95, 97, 100, 199, 206, 241

Heraclius (Flavius Heraclius Augustus), Byzantine emperor, 55, 141, 142

Hippolytus, pope, 177

Hiram I, Phoenician king of Tyre, 121

Hrabr the Monk, 59, 78, 80

Hrelyo, feudal lord, 186

ibn Fadlan, 134

ibn Rusteh, 134, 136

Ibrahim ibn-Yakub (al-Tartushi), 133

Iconium, town, 230

Ignatius, patriarch, 58

Innocent III, pope, 15, 71, 185

Irnik (Ernach), mythical Bulgar ruler – 105, 108–111, 112, 114

Isaac II Angelos, Byzantine emperor, 69, 70

Isaak Komnenos, Byzantine emperor, 232, 234

Isaak Komnenus, Sebastokrator, 196

Isaiah of Serres (inok Isaija), 75

Isaiah, biblical prophet, 117–118, 121, 180–182, 249
 Isidore of Seville, 110
 Izot, mythical Bulgar ruler, 123

Jeremias I, Patriarch, 261
 Jerusalem, town, 116, 118, 164, 209, 226, 253
 Joachim III, patriarch, 46
 Joakim of Osogovo, 248
 Joannes Zonaras, 125
 John VIII, pope, 58, 211, 212
 John Aenos, archbishop, 231–232
 John Alexander, tsar, 16, 125
 John and Benjamin, Bulgarian princes, brothers of Tsar Peter, 144
 John Apokaukos, bishop, 245
 John Asen I, tsar, 64–65, 180, 186
 John Chrysostom, archbishop, 59
 John Doukas, sebastos, dux of Dyrrhachium, 232
 John the Exarch, 2, 157–159
 John Gospodin, archbishop, 228
 John Kamateros, archbishop, 247
 John VI Kantakouzenos, Byzantine emperor, 76
 John Komnenos, Byzantine emperor, 196, 213, 217, 234, 235, 238
 John Komnenos, archbishop, 213, 217, 232, 246
 John Malalas, 167–170
 John of Damascus, 40, 59, 78
 John of Debăr, archbishop, 228
 John of Lampi (John Lampinus), archbishop, 231, 246
 John of Rila, 64, 65, 76, 175, 179, 185, 186, 199–202, 248, 250, 278
 John Skylitzes – 218, 219, 227, 229, 238
 John I Tzimiskes, Byzantine emperor, 39, 42, 184, 225–226, 239
 John Vladimir, prince, 184, 198, 227, 239
 John Vladislav, tsar, 227, 228
 John Xiphilinus, patriarch, 231, 246
 John Zonaras (Ioannes Zonaras), 63, 125
 John, bishop of Nikiu, 141
 John, bishop of Thessaloniki, 66
 John, Bulgarian prince, brother of Tsar Peter, 62
 Jovan Uglješa, despot, 264
 Judea, province, 164
 Justin II, Byzantine emperor, 97–99, 215
 Justinian I, Byzantine emperor, 52, 53, 95, 97, 98, 131, 167, 215, 216, 237, 238
 Justinian II, Byzantine emperor, 97, 142, 216

Kalofer, town, 182
 Kaloyan, tsar, 64, 71, 72, 185, 278

Kanina, town – 222
Karaachteke, 192–194, 198–202, 206
Karamanite, village, 153
Karvuna, town, 117–119, 121
Katasyrtai, 43
Kičevo, town, 223
Kiev, town, 134, 158, 239
Kinam, 55
Kjulevča, village, 153
Kocel, prince, 221
Koh, Avar envoy, 53
Konstantin Kostenechki, 27
Konstantin Lichudes, patriarch, 231
Kormesios (Kormisosh), Bulgar khan, 144
Kosmas Presbyter, 14, 78, 288
Koubrat (Kurt), Bulgar ruler, 55, 111–114, 141
Kraishte, village, 182
Krepcha, village, 200, 201, 203
Kresna, gorge, 97
Krum, Bulgar khan, 42, 54–56, 139, 140, 142, 167, 200, 201, 203
Krupišta, village, 224
Kuban, river, 112
Kutmichevitsa, village, 189, 237

Laocoön, 49
Leo I, pope, 36
Leo IV „the Khazar“, Byzantine emperor, 143
Leo V the Armenian, Byzantine emperor, 54, 56
Leo VI the Wise, Byzantine emperor, 57, 162
Leo Kastamonites, 196
Leo Mung (Leo Mungos), archbishop – 233, 246
Leo Paphlagon, archbishop, 245
Leon, archbishop, 218, 229–230
Leonid, archimandrite, 170
Leontius, patriarch, 44
Liudprand of Cremona, 147, 155
Louis II (Louis the Bavarian), Frankish emperor, 169
Lucius Valerius Flaccus, 50

Macarius, patriarch, 46
Macedonia, 12, 28, 48, 83, 94, 97, 182, 216, 224, 235, 242, 253, 264, 269, 274, 283
Madara, 12, 16, 152, 153
Maeotis, lake, 171
Malamir, Bulgar khan, 138
Manuel I Komnenos, Byzantine emperor, 246

Manuel I Sarantenos, patriarch, 245
 Marcellus of Ankyra, 220
 Marcian (Flavius Marcianus Augustus), Byzantine emperor, 36
 Maria of Alania, Byzantine empress, 234
 Maria-Irene Lecapena, Byzantine princess, spouse of Tsar Peter I, 61, 144, 147
 Maritsa, river, 84, 95–96
 Matthew Blastares, 39, 43
 Mauricius (Pseudo-Mauricius), 52–53
 Mauritius Tiberius (Flavius Mauricius Tiberius Augustus), Byzantine emperor, 96
 Maximus, governor of Achaia, 49
 Menander Protector, 97, 122
 Menander, 52–53, 99, 132, 169
 Mesembria, town, 74, 241
 Methodius, apostle of the Slavs, 3, 60, 67, 211, 212, 220–222, 224, 235, 237, 252, 268
 Michael, bagatour, 193
 Michael of Anchialos, patriarch, 213
 Michael of Devol, bishop, 218–219, 238
 Michael Cerularius, patriarch, 230
 Michael I Keroularios, archbishop, 246
 Michael Maximus, archbishop, 233, 234, 246
 Michael Psellus, 232
 Michael I Rangabe, Byzantine emperor, 131
 Mircea Voda, village, 62
 Morea, 83
 Moscow, 118, 177, 212, 213
 Moses, biblical religious leader, lawgiver and prophet, 123, 186, 249
 Moštenti, village, 215
 Mostich, *ičirgu-boila*, 192, 194–195, 198–200, 205
 Mount Athos, 48, 75, 176, 177, 191, 253–260, 262–266, 269
 Murfatlar, village, 198
 Myrmekion, town, 171

 Nagy-Szent-Miklós, 16
 Naissus (Niš), town, 97
 Naum of Ohrid, 189–192, 199, 252
 Nebuchadnezzar, king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, 116, 164
 Neilos Doxopater, 214, 218, 244
 Nicephorus Botaniates, Byzantine emperor, 231, 234
 Nicephorus I Genikos (Nicephorus I, Logothetes), Eastern Roman emperor, 54
 Nicephorus II Phocas, Byzantine emperor, 148, 161
 Nicephorus Vasilakios, dux, 231
 Nicephorus, patriarch, 113, 140–142, 160
 Nicholas I Mystikos, patriarch, 57, 60, 146, 158–160, 171
 Nicholas I, pope, 15, 57, 135, 164–165, 221,
 Nicholas III Grammatikos, patriarch, 245–246

Nicopolis ad Nestum, town, 98–99
 Nikephoros Gregoras, 52
 Niketas Choniates, 70
 Novo Brdo, town, 259

Odin, Norse god, 109, 164
 Odon de Deuil (Eudes of Deuil), 68
 Ohrid, 17, 20, 48, 65, 125–126, 189–191, 198–200, 202, 204–206, 209–215, 217–227, 229–235, 237, 238, 240–252, 285, 286
 Olympus, mountain, 231
 Omurtag, Bulgar khan, 42, 54–55, 138–140, 151, 166, 201
 Onglos (Oglos), territory north of the Danube River, 113, 127
 Otto I the Great, Holy Roman Emperor, 147

Pandeh, 79
 Pannonia, principality, 211, 216, 224
 Paphlagonia, ancient area on the Black Sea coast of north central Anatolia, 132, 229, 245
 Patleina, near Preslav, 192, 195–196, 200, 205
 Paul of Latro, 188
 Pericles, 33
 Pernik, town, 97–99
 Peter I, tsar, 44, 61, 63, 122–123, 144–147, 161, 162, 173–188, 192, 237–239, 241
 Peter II Delyan, tsar, 184, 240
 Peter the Monk, 175
 Philippopolis (Pulpudeva, Trimontium, Plovdiv), 64, 97
 Philotheos, *prōtopatharios* and *atriklinēs*, 146–147
 Photios, patriarch, 14, 39, 135, 286
 Plato, 33
 Pliny the Younger, 49
 Pliska, 12, 16, 20, 25–26, 54–56, 122, 125, 151–152, 164, 184, 192–194, 198–201, 204, 225, 288
 Plovdiv (Philippopolis, Pulpudeva, Trimontium), town, 64, 97
 Polog, town, 223
 Polybius, 33
 Preda Buzescu, župan, 260
 Presian, Bulgar khan, 55, 138
 Preslav, 12, 13, 16, 20, 25–26, 43, 61, 62, 66, 125, 157, 159, 161, 163, 166–170, 176, 184, 192, 194–196, 199–201, 204–205, 225, 226, 239, 241, 249, 288
 Prilep, town, 223
 Priscus, 53
 Procopius of Caesaria (Procopius Caesarensis), 53, 93–95, 105, 150, 215
 Prohor of Pchinya, 248
 Proto-Bulgarians, 2, 16, 18, 133, 152–153, 159, 165, 274, 276, 280, 286
 Protogenes, archbishop, 220, 221

Radivoi of Preslav, Bulgarian prince, 66
 Raven, town, 66, 224
 Ravna, village, 192–194, 198–203, 206
 Rhodope, mountains, 94–95, 223
 Richard of London (Ricardus, Canonicus Sanctae Trinitatis Londoniensis), 68
 Robert Guiscard, 240
 Roman I Lakapenos (Romanos I Lekapenos), Byzantine emperor – 61, 80, 238
 Romania, 8, 141, 197
 Rome, 33, 34, 37–38, 46, 58, 69, 72, 117–118, 121, 125, 127, 180–183, 209, 216, 218, 221, 224, 226, 230
 Rothari (Rothair), king of the Lombards, 109, 165
 Russia, 1–4, 9, 19, 34, 62, 153

Sallust (Gaius Sallustius Crispus), 49–50
 Samuel, tsar, 63–64, 184, 211, 225–228, 230, 237, 242
 Sandanski, town – 98–99
 Scythia Minor – 109
 Selishte, village, 192, 194, 196
 Serdica, see Sofia
 Sergius, patriarch, 211, 219, 225
 Silvestre, archbishop, 211, 212
 Skylitzes Continuatus, 231
 Slav, mythical Bulgar ruler, 118, 121–123
 Slavs, 2, 5, 6, 52, 67, 93, 95, 97, 119, 122, 162, 168, 221, 253–265, 274, 286–288
 Socrates, church historian, 219
 Sofia (Serdica, Triaditsa, Sredets), town, 96–97, 180, 215, 219–220, 226, 241, 250
 Solomon, biblical King of Israel, 61, 121
 Sozomenus, 219
 Sozopolis, town, 74
 Sredishte, village, 152
 St. Ambrose, 37
 St. Antonius, 228
 St. Archangel Michael, 175
 St. Augustine, 124
 St. Blaise, 192
 St. Clement of Achriss, 190
 St. Demetrios of Thessaloniki, 185
 St. Demetrius of Cephalonia, 190
 St. George, 122, 144, 198, 212, 259, 271
 St. Helena, 180
 St. Martyr Mokios, 230
 St. Paraskeva/Petka, 185, 187
 St. Romylos of Vidin, 255–256, 258
 Stefan Dušan (Stephen Uroš IV Dušan of Serbia), king, 255, 263–264
 Stephen Lazarević, despot, 259

Stephen Milutin, king, 177
 Strandja, mountain, 75
 Struma, river, 96–97, 100, 115
 Svjatoslav of Kiev, prince, 239
 Symeon Logothete, 125
 Symeon, prince and tsar, 2, 4, 43, 44, 57, 59–62, 80, 115–116, 123, 144, 145, 157–159, 162–169, 171, 173, 174, 183, 190–193, 198–199, 205, 222, 237, 239, 241, 276, 286

Telerig (Theophylactus), Bulgar khan, 143
 Tervel, Bulgar khan, 54–55, 139, 142–144
 Tetrapolis, town, 230
 Theodora, Byzantine empress, 230
 Theodora–Kosara, 184
 Theodore Komnenos, Byzantine emperor, 231
 Theodoros Balsamon, 218
 Theodoros, comes sacrarum largitionum, 98–99
 Theodore of Stoudios, 40
 Theodosios Voradiotes, patriarch, 247
 Theodosius I (Flavius Theodosius), Byzantine emperor, 216
 Theodosius III, Byzantine emperor, 144
 Theodulos, archbishop, 230
 Theophanes Confessor, 113, 132, 140, 142, 144, 161, 169
 Theophanes Continuatus, 54, 56, 62, 99, 145
 Theophylact of Ohrid (Theophylact of Euripus, Theophylact of Bulgaria), archbishop, 12, 14, 55, 65, 213, 220–222, 225, 232–234, 244–246, 248, 250, 282
 Theophylact Simocatta, 53
 Thessaloniki, 65–66, 96, 99, 185, 190, 216, 221, 233, 234, 249
 Thessaly, 97, 170–171
 Thrace, 54, 84, 88, 94–95, 201, 244, 287
 Tiberiopolis (Strumica), town, 222, 224
 Tiberius (Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus), Roman emperor, 52
 Tobias ben Eliezer, 233
 Tudor Doksov, 166
 Turcsan, 52
 Tŭrnovo (Tŭrnovgrad), town, 12, 20, 26, 46, 48, 72, 73, 125, 180, 219, 241, 243, 244, 247, 251, 261, 289

Umor, Bulgar khan, 103

Vardar (Axios), river, 222, 223
 Varna, town, 13, 154, 192, 193, 201
 Velbužd, town, 117
 Velika, river, 222–224
 Venice, town, 15, 18, 181, 268, 280
 Viking of Nitra, bishop, 212

Virgil, 49
Virgin Mary, 143, 187, 210, 235
Vladimir Sviatoslavich the Great, grand prince of Kiev, 239
Vladimir-Rasate, Bulgar khan and prince, 46, 158
Voden, see Edessa, 226
Vulkashina, village, 205

William of Tyre, 218

Zeta, town, 240
Zoe, Byzantine empress, 60
Zorobabel, governor of the Persian Province of Judah, 157
Ztathius, Lazian ruler, 169